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THE GIRDLE OF THE GLOBE.

THE "VICTORIA" IN A STORM.

Oh, she rose so high and dry,
That she towered in the sky,
Then she sank down by-and-bye
In the trough;

And she rocked from side to side,
In the swishing, swirling tide,
Till it humbled down my pride
Quite enough.

THE

GIRDLE OF THE GLOBE;

OR

THE VOYAGE OF MISTER MUCKLEMOUTH.

BEING A POEM

DESCRIPTIVE OF TOIL AND TRAVEL ROUND THE WORLD.

In Ten Cantos.

43697

By RALPH.

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Dedication.

THOUGH some may count it somewhat vain
To dedicate a song
To rovers of such wide domain
As Britain's wayward throng;
Yet still, whatever such may say,
And say it to their fill,
E'en so I dedicate this lay
With fervour and good will.

Imprimis, to the sea-girt nest,
Whose young have flown so far,
Nor feared the swelling waves to breast,
To breast the tide of war;
Though, oh! we toss upon the sea,
And cross the desert sand,
In life, in death, ne'er, ne'er must we
Forget our native land.

Secundo, to the brood so fair,
That migrate to and fro
On lusty wings, to do and dare
Where'er on earth they go;
To all our countless colonies,
Throughout the land and main,
In union joined across the seas
By Freedom and Love's chain.

And lastly, how can I forget
Our brother Jonathun?
For oftentimes we must regret
We lost so great a son;
Our blood still mingles in his veins,
Though vain he must have been
To tum-tum YANKEE DOODLE strains,
For GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

PREFACE.

It is said that good wine needs no bush, and would that, for the same reason, my book would need no preface. But I must mention here that the poem is composed partly of fiction and partly of facts of personal experience. It is not my province to point out to the reader which is which, save only to say that, like other poems, the greater portion of this one belongs to the region of fancy and not of fact. Whatever literary merit the poem may possess, it is, at any rate, I think, the only long poem in the language going over so wide a range, and written by one who has gone over the greater portion of the ground himself. Indeed, on com-

paring notes with THE VOYAGE OF MISTER MUCKLEMOUTH, I find that, far as I have made that enthusiast to roam, I have roamed even farther myself.

I have just now before me a list of my more important peregrinations. Never counting the same road more than once, and strictly excluding all return and repetition journeys, I find that from start to finish, partly for pleasure and partly on duty, I have travelled sixty-five thousand statute miles, which, for a single outing, would probably beat the record of almost any other traveller

> "Travelling by land and spray
> Of the waves."

The journey extended even from Siberia in the north to Stewart's Island in the south, from Japan in the east to California in the west, and from hundreds of feet below the level of the sea to eighteen thousand feet above it. Of this long distance, twenty-three thousand miles were

on land, lakes and rivers; and the rest on the wild, wide waste of waters. A narrow escape from shipwreck in the celebrated CITY OF PARIS was only what might be expected, as a proper finish to so long a voyage.

I must take this opportunity to thank the various Governments of NEW SOUTH WALES, VICTORIA, and NEW ZEALAND for their kindness in granting me free passes over their railways, and, as the only mark of gratitude that I could tender for such a privilege, a copy of this humble volume will be supplied to the libraries of their respective Universities.

Fletcher of Saltoun was a brave patriot who had to flee his native land, like many others of his kind, in the troublous years and days gone by, and nothing has ever been heard of the fate of poor Fletcher. But he lives for ever in the annals of his country on account of one single, happy expression—namely, that he did not care who made his country's laws as long as

he could have the making of his country's ballads. Most people will appreciate the force of this statement; for the ballads of a country are often the fountainhead even of the country's laws, and reflect the character of a nation more than we are liable to suppose among the more menial duties of every-day life. Bearing, then, this in mind, gentle reader, read away; and when you find faults, condemn them, but pardon the offender, as he has written with the sincere desire that, in binding us all in the one great, confederate nation we all wish to be, ballads and politics should go hand in hand.

RALPH.

THE SCOTTISH CLUB,
PICCADILLY *Derby-Day*, 1890.

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Nemo me impune lacessit.

THE

GIRDLE OF THE GLOBE.

☞ Before reading a Canto, the reader is kindly recommended first to read any short notes on that Canto that may be given at the end of the book, as I think footnotes spoil poems by diverting the reader's attention.—

RALPH.

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

IT was with the P. and O.
That I booked myself to go,
In their good ship the *Victoria* hight;
To go round and see the world,
With my gallant sails unfurled,
And to witness how it twirled
In its flight.

II.

'Twas a jolly, jolly crew,
And the ship was jolly new,
Well commanded by the true
Jolly Cates;
While a dozen lithe and tall
Officers were at his call,
And I guess that they were all
Jolly mates.

III.

In the year of Jubilee
Of Her Gracious Majesty,
'Twas it seemed so fit to me
I should roam;
With my Gladstone bag and trunk
Neatly packed below my bunk,
And without a bit of funk
Leaving home.

IV.

At the desk and at the board,
To accumulate a hoard,
I had slaved till I abhorred
Board and desk;
Now the hoard that I had won,
What on earth was to be done,
But to spend it part in fun
And burlesque!

V.

I had in the Consols clear
Fifty thousand pounds a year,
And a heap of gold and gear
Lined my nest;
How I came by all my gain
To inquire would be in vain,
And it might give rise to pain
In my breast.

VI.

But my learning wasn't great,
Though I built a great estate,
Early labouring and late
With my pen;
Not the planets to explore,
Nor in scientific lore,
But to heap a thousand more,
There and then.

VII.

But at last the work grew tame,
As I always longed for fame,
And a great and sounding name,
To eclipse
All the poets of all time
Who had tried their hand at rhyme,
And the rovers who could climb
Sides of ships.

VIII.

I had often wished before
The Equator to explore
With the gallant Commodore
Of the fleet;
To observe what sort of chain
Circumnavigates the main,
Which I never could explain
Quite complete.

IX.

With my very heart and soul
I had longed to see the Pole,
And the Scot who takes the toll
At the top;
How the merry world goes round
On its axle underground,
And for everlasting bound
Not to stop.

X.

Many furlongs from my door
I had seldom been before,
Seldom seen the sea or shore
All my life;
For in famous London Town
I had married *not* a clown,
And had early settled down
With my wife.

XI.

But when I revealed my plan,
Said my saucy Mary Anne :—
"No, you cannot ;" "Yes I can,"
I replied,
"For I'm bound to go and rove,
And to leave you, my true love,
But will turn, like Noah's dove,
To your side."

XII.

"Mister Mucklemouth," said she,
"We have lived in harmony,
And in harmony will be
Till we die."
"There's a crotchet in my head,
I must travel," so I said ;
"Dearest partner of my bed,
Ask not why."

XIII.

"But," quoth she, "what will you do
With your wife and babies two ?"
"I shall leave them all to you,
Darling dear."
Here my dear commenced to cry,
While she heaved a bitter sigh,
And I saw that from her eye
Dropped the tear.

XIV.

That's the way she had of old
When she wished her own to hold,
And he were a champion bold
Who could stand
All unmoved by her soft sighs,
Unaffected by her cries,
And unsoftened by her eyes'
Sweet command.

XV.

To my wisdom ever kind,
To my follies ever blind,
All the virtues she combined
In her frame ;
Elegance of form and face,
Moral beauties in their place,
And the pink of every grace
You could name.

XVI.

So I promptly put my arm
Round her waist, with passion warm,
Swore I'd keep her safe from harm,
Like a man.
Then her tears began to dry,
Ceased that melancholy sigh,
And I said no more to my
Mary Anne.

XVII.

But the fancy grew and grew,
And I got so restless too,
That my head began to brew,
And grow light;
Like the instinct that will guide
Birds of passage far and wide,
So I longed to cross the tide
Day and night.

XVIII.

And I read so many books
Of adventure, that my looks
Shortly failed me, though my cooks
Did their best;
For I ne'er enjoyed my food,
Nor my wine, however good,
Since my mind began to brood
Without rest.

XIX.

Things that I had lately read
Puzzled very much my head,
For my learning, as I said,
Wasn't great;
And I panted sore to see
How such miracles could be,
For they all seemed so to me
In my state.

XX.

I had got a knack to rhyme,
Out of tune and out of time,
Which I hoped a foreign clime
Might improve;
For I thought it might expand
If I left my native land,
And sought out some distant strand,
Far to rove.

XXI.

I resolved, whate'er I did,
Climbed, perhaps, the Pyramid,
Or the mighty waves bestrid,
To rehearse
Every little joy and pain,
Far across the raging main,
To my love at home again,
In plain verse;

XXII.

Also that my random rhyme,
In commenting on each clime,
Would keep up a measured time
With the screw,
As it circled round and round,
Giving out its muffled sound,
With a rhythm which I found
To be true.

XXIII.

Reader, are you now at sea,
As you read this tale from me?
Then, unless you hap to be
Down the dumps,
Listen, listen to the screw,
As I would if I were you,
And compare this measure true
To its thumps.

XXIV.

I at last made up my mind
To elude my womankind,
And so leave her far behind,
By the hearth;
For I knew that to depart
From the darling of my heart
Was a feat that she might thwart
At its birth.

XXV.

Meantime cousin Tom I made
Locum Tenens in my stead,
And of all my house the head,
And my wife
To protect, and guide, and guard,
In her innocence unmarred,
For which he should have reward
All his life.

XXVI.

Plenty money, plenty store,
Plenty many items more,
There I left him and galore
Gold and pelf;
And I gave him my advice
To be fair in matters nice,
Without harm or prejudice
To himself.

XXVII.

Then, ere dawn eclipsed the moon,
I awoke in doleful tune,
For I knew that soon, too soon
I should go;
And I gave my wife a kiss,
Which was far from being amiss,
Ere I sailed the deep abyss
To and fro.

XXVIII.

What a wrenching sore it was?
Yet to hesitate or pause
Was to ruin the great cause
Of my life;
So I gazed on her fair brow,
Sleeping peacefully, I trow,
And I took my farewell now
Of my wife.

XXIX.

Next I sought, to catch the train,
Waterloo, and thence again
Portsmouth Town upon the main,
And espied
What a fascinating scene
Was the ocean's noble mien,
Stretching forth its blazing sheen
Far and wide.

XXX.

Exhibitions without end,
Part for show and part to vend
Articles of cunning blend,
Oft I saw;
And, a little while ago,
I had seen the Yankee show
Of the Wild Bill Buffalo,
Puff and pshaw!

XXXI.

What were all of them to this
Grandeur of the calm abyss,
That the heavens seemed to kiss,
And the isles;
And that seemed the land to lave
With its gentle, wimpling wave,
And the shelving shores to pave
With its smiles?

XXXII.

Nothing that I ever saw
Struck me with such pious awe,
As the sight without a flaw
Of the sea;
So serene it was and grand,
Spreading out away from land,
That I longed to leave the strand,
Far and free.

XXXIII.

Oh, it was a glorious day
When I first saw Portsmouth Bay,
Such as if it seemed to say
"This is fine!
Who would loaf upon the quay
This good year of Jubilee,
Nor prefer far, far to flee
On the brine?"

XXXIV.

The next sight that met my view
Was the lads in naval blue.
"These are Britain's heroes true,"
I exclaim;
"These are Albion's tameless tars,
Such as they who won our wars
Through La Hogue's and Trafalgar's
Fire and flame."

XXXV.

Oh! they seemed so neatly dressed,
Manly shoulders, open breast,
And the heart ne'er, ne'er oppressed
By the foe;
Till they perish they will stand
For their true-love, native land,
To defend it hand to hand,
Blow to blow.

XXXVI.

One could gather from their stride
They were wont to roam the tide;
There was that impulsive pride
In their shape;
Which no land-lubber can learn,
Much although his soul may yearn,
And, though easy to discern,
Hard to ape.

XXXVII.

Like their garb of naval blue,
So their eyes were azure too,
And they looked a gallant crew,
Frank and fair;
Who would go through blood and fire,
In the carnage dark and dire,
Did their country so desire
Them to dare.

XXXVIII.

Oh, the bulldogs that they were,
With their proud, defiant air,
Made me for a moment stare
With delight!
And I blest the happy day
I had ran from home away,
And that first old Portsmouth Bay
Met my sight.

XXXIX.

Stretching out beyond the quay,
What a forest I could see
Swaying in its motion free
On the tide!
And in awe I sealed my lips
To behold these glorious ships,
Vying each to each eclipse,
In their pride.

XL.

Yet in one united whole
On the foemen they would roll,
Belching out from each porthole
Fire and death;
From the morning's dewy dawn
Till the sunset on the lawn,
And the foe commenced to yawn
Out of breath.

XLI.

Then I shouted with delight—
" This is Britain's navy bright ! "
To which made a midshipmite
Answer meet :—
" Where the mighty billows roll,
Stretching forth from pole to pole,
There alone you find the whole
Of our fleet."

XLII.

And I blessed the gallant boy,
Who was but a tiny toy,
And I wished him every joy
And success,
When it came to be his turn
To destroy, and sink, and burn,
But the orphan ne'er to spurn
In distress.

XLIII.

Towering among the rest
Was the craft I loved the best,
The renowned and handsomest
Wooden wall ;
Which, though worn with age of late,
And her gear gone out of date,
Still maintains her reign of state
Over all.

XLIV.

Ask me not which this might be,
'Twas the far-famed *Victory*,—
Pride of ships that sailed the sea
In the strife;
Which the gallant hero bore
From his native northern shore,
To return to it no more
In his life.

XLV.

There the spot where Nelson fell,
Shrine of heroes, there to dwell
On the glories that so well
Decked his brow;
To inspire both son and sire
With his own immortal fire,
Which the fear of evil dire
Ne'er could cow.

XLVI.

Oh, thou valiant *Victory!*
I bow down myself to thee,
Bravest of the brave and free,
Days gone by;
Though now crumbling at thy berth,
Thy fair fame from board and hearth,
To the ends of all the earth,
Ne'er shall die.

XLVII.

But while I soliloquised,
I was very much surprised
To behold the idolised
Man-o'-war
Sinking at her moorings down;
Then I ran about the town,
Shouting like a circus clown
Loud and far :—

XLVIII.

"Ho, the *Vic*—the *Victory*,
Bravest of the brave and free,
Is fast sinking in the sea—
Rescue Ho!"
Then the midshipmite I spied,
With his sailors by his side,
While their bending oars they plied,
Sweeping low.

XLIX.

"Now give way, my lads!" the lad
Shouted out, as if he had
Been accustomed to all sad
Sights at sea;
And without a whisper more,
Bent each oarsman to his oar
And away, away they bore
From the quay.

L.

Then each vessel manned her boat,
To preserve the ship afloat,
That had valorously fought
France and Spain;
And they pumped the water out,
Stopped the leakage without doubt,
And then turned the right-about,
Back again.

LI.

Soon I heard a whistle blow,
That made such a frightful row,
As if all the fiends below
Shrieked with pain;
'Twas the warning of our ship,
She was parting on her trip,
And would soon her cable slip
For the main.

LII.

The Blue Peter flying too,
Told the sorry tale but true,
That the hour to say adieu
Drew so nigh;
And the hurry-scurry soon,
On that noted afternoon,
Grew into a trot and run,
By-and-by.

LIII.

Oh, the tumult and the roar—
Both of which I much abhor—
That they made the hour before
We set sail!
Missing friends and luggage lost,
Parting blessings prized the most,
And late letters sent to post
On the mail!

LIV.

Having all my baggage scored
Like the luggage of Milord,
I then tumbled right on board
With a rush;
And I saw the giddy throng
Rush so recklessly along,
That I felt confused among
Such a crush.

LV.

There were kisses, there were tears,
There were many, many dears
Going off for divers years
On the foam;
Some were parting to remain
On the field of battle slain,
Never to return again
To their home.

LVI.

"Now then, by your engines stand,"
Quoth the captain in command,
While some cunning, viewless hand
Promptly sends
Answer to his signal bell,
Tolling our departing knell,
And we wave a long farewell
To our friends.

LVII.

Reader, have you ever been
In the midst of such a scene?
Then your human heart, I ween,
Melted sore,
As the monster vessel shook
In a tremor, and you took
Your long, lingering, last look
Of the shore;

LVIII.

Knowing not if sense or sight
Ever more should take delight
In the landscape fading right
Out of view;
Or if ever, ever more
You should see your native shore,
To which now you said a sore,
Sore adieu.

LIX.

And I thought, as you may guess,
Of my wife, and none the less,
That I knew her great distress
For my flight;
And I pictured Mary Anne
Weeping for her wicked man,
Who had fled away and ran
From her sight.

LX.

But what use repining now,
When the ship's majestic prow
Through the waves begins to plough,
Sails unfurled?
For although it might behove
Me to stay, and not to rove,
I must travel creek and cove
Round the world.

LXI.

Having cleared each rock and ridge,
Captain Cates came off the bridge,
And I hoped he might oblige,
Even then,
To sketch out upon the chart
Every foreign port and part,
And I begged of him to start
With his pen.

LXII.

"Captain Cates," said I to him,
"You look very smart and trim,
Though perhaps not quite so slim
As you were;
I am Mister Mucklemouth,
On my travels to the south,
Thirsting, like a land in drouth,
To be there."

LXIII.

"As we now proceed to sea,
Pray, oh, pray, describe to me
Where hot Hindustan may be,
And how long
Shall we take to reach the land,
Heber called the coral strand,
Though I'm led to understand
He was wrong."

LXIV.

My allusion to his look
The good Captain quite mistook,
Being as proud as any duke
That I saw;
And he scowled with such a frown,
Thinking I was such a clown,
That you might have knocked me down
With a straw.

LXV.

"Plenty globe-trotters like you,"
Cried the Captain in a stew,
"Have an itch to go and view
Hindustan.
Why the dickens don't you go
When the sun is in his glow,
If you wish that you should know
All you can?"

LXVI.

"Go to Sibi for a year,
If you wish to have a clear
Understanding of the dear,
Blessèd land;
It will teach you, I am sure,
All your troubles to endure,
And for evermore abjure
Burning sand.

LXVII.

"There are plenty 'devils' there
Shooting up into the air,
And I doubt if you would care
For their dust;
They might make you run and fly,
If not quite so very high,
Still enough to make you cry
In disgust.

LXVIII.

" It is you who come and spoil
Competitionwallas' moil,
In the regions where they toil
Like a slave ;
Judging what you little know
Of the Tropics' summer glow,
By the winter trip you go
O'er the wave."

LXIX.

He was turning round to leave,
When I caught him by the sleeve,
And I said : " It does me grieve
Very sore
You should take me for a spy
Of departments on the sly,
While a rover, sir, am I,
And no more.

LXX

" I am on my travels bound,
All dominions to go round,
For delight in what is found
On each spot ;
But a h-Exter 'All M.P.,
Which I never wished to be,
By the Lord's benign decree
I am not."

LXXI.

Then the captain gave a smile
At my h-Exter 'All the while,
And I saw he liked the style
Of my speech;
But as he had much to do,
Looking after ship and crew,
So he bowed, and then withdrew
Out of reach.

LXXII.

I was growing ill at ease
As I shivered in the breeze,
And beheld the swelling seas
Rolling by;
And I felt so very queer,
That I lost my merry cheer,
And had soon to disappear
With a sigh.

LXXIII.

Shortly after leaving land
'Twas I found I couldn't stand,
Nor possess the same command
Of my feet;
For the ship commenced to roll,
With a heavy, heaving growl,
And my heart without control
'Gan to beat.

LXXIV.

Oh! she rose so high and dry
That she towered in the sky,
Then she sank down by-and-by
In the trough;
And she rocked from side to side,
In the swishing, swirling tide,
That it humbled down my pride
Quite enough.

LXXV.

It was then that I began
Thinking of my Mary Anne,
And the trip to far Japan
O'er the main;
Feeling like a fugitive
Whom the gods would not forgive,
And would rather die than live
Life again.

LXXVI.

Oh! the Bay of Biscay's swell
I remember very well,
Though I hardly now can tell
Well again
How its billows wild would seethe
As they sank far down beneath,
And then rose to show their teeth
And grey mane.

LXXVII.

There were rising in my throat
Certain qualms that I could not
Calm by any antidote
For the bile;
For my sickness grew and grew,
Till I knew not what to do,
Nor could do it if I knew
All the while.

LXXVIII.

And I felt so giddy, oh!
By the time I went below,
That I further could not go
For my life;
But bewailed the sorry lot
That had brought me to the spot,
And again, again I thought
Of my wife.

LXXIX.

Were I guided by the strings
Of her apron in all things,
How much happier than kings
I should be!
Here the vessel gave a lurch,
And I swore by Mother Church
She was sinking in the surge
Of the sea.

LXXX.

Engines that a while before
Throbbed with music in their roar,
Music now possessed no more
To my ear;
But an awful, sullen sound,
Ever thumping round and round,
That effectually drowned
My good cheer.

LXXXI.

Everything also stank
In my nostrils, till I shrank
From the stenches that I drank
Through my nose;
Grease and gravy and whale oil
All together seemed to boil,
And were quite enough to spoil
My repose.

LXXXII.

Finally, a clammy, cold
Perspiration took a hold
Of my frame—nor needs be told
What befel;
For the steward how I cried,
With a feeble voice that died
Ere it reached the other side
Of my cell.

LXXXIII.

Then the vessel plunged about,
And the wind commenced to shout,
Piping the good ship throughout
With its thrill;
Till a spasm caught me so
That I curled from top to toe,
And began to hiccup "Oh!"
Loud and shrill.

LXXXIV.

"Steward, oh!" I cried again,
In my nauseating pain,
"Give me something to restrain
My distress."
When, behold and lo, he brought
Me a basin on the spot,
For the purpose which, I wot,
You can guess.

LXXXV.

Then I felt I was the tool
Of my folly and a ghoul,
So to overflowing full
Was my cup;
Just like Jonah in the gale
I was curst on board the mail,
And I cared not if a whale
Gulped me up.

LXXXVI.

So I prayed that I should drown,
And I called the Doctor down,
Begging that I might be thrown
Overboard;
But the Doctor, the good man,
To relieve my pain began
While my suicidal plan
He ignored.

LXXXVII.

All he gave me—goodness knows!—
To relieve my pressing woes
Never did abate my throes,
But increased;
Amyl nitrate, iced champagne,
Brandy bitters and cocaine
My distress could not restrain
In the least.

LXXXVIII.

Till at last he probed my skin
With a needle sharp and thin,
While he said that from within
Magic flowed;
And it pricked so very slight,
Without drop of blood in sight,
Where the magic minims dight
He bestowed.

LXXXIX.

After that I fell asleep,
And I dreamt I saw the deep
Swirling over in a heap
Round my head;
While the crackling in my ears
Even now methinks mehears,
And will hear for future years,
Till I'm dead.

XC.

The loud gurgle in my throat
Was a most discordant note,
As I laboured hard to float,
Though in vain;
And I splashed the sea about
In my efforts to get out,
But my struggles were without
Any gain.

XCI.

And I saw the cods and lings,
And the fish with spines and stings,
Alongside the slimy things
Of the ooze;
Waiting there to tear and gnaw,
With their wide and open maw—
These and other things I saw
In my snooze.

XCII.

Many monsters gathered round,
Which are only to be found
In the bowels without bound
Of the wave;
Looking with their gloating eyes
Like grim demons in disguise,
While their horrid shrieks and cries
Made me rave.

XCIII.

And how fast the fiends could swim!
With their yells and visage grim,
And their shadows dark and dim,
Like a ghost;
Darting at me with their claws
And grimaces without pause,
Till I surely thought I was
To be lost.

XCIV.

Some of them began to pinch,
Till I shuddered every inch,
Fearing they were going to lunch
And to board;
Till an Octopus came round,
And its tentacles it wound
Round my body, which they bound
Like a cord.

XCV.

Ugh! the feel of cold despair
That went through me then and there,
As he sought his tangle lair,
There to slay;
And I felt his horrors twine
Round my bosom on the brine,
Ere he yet commenced to dine
On his prey.

XCVI.

Then he gave me such a squeeze
That I couldn't even sneeze,
Far less shout or cry for ease
From his grasp;
Just the same to die or drown,
I was sinking down, down, down
In the filmy fathoms brown
With a gasp.

XCVII.

While he held me in his fold
He relaxed his cruel hold,
Then I waxed a little bold
To my foe;
And I caught my whittle knife,
My first present from my wife
When commencing wedded life
Long ago.

XCVIII.

And I cut the brute in twain,
While he wriggled in his pain,
Till I felt that once again
I was free;
When I saw the selfsame whale
Swallowed Jonah in the gale,
Swimming over to regale
Over me.

XCIX.

Then I felt as in a shroud
In his belly, and a cloud
Of lang syne sensations crowd
On my brain;
And my heart began to bleed,
As upon my soul with speed
Flashed each thought and word and deed
O'er again.

C.

All my love and all my hate,
All the actions foul and straight
I committed long or late;
There they were;
And my sins were so much more
Than my merits, I deplore,
That I shuddered in my sore,
Sore despair.

CI.

Till I saw beside me stand
Son of God in glory grand,
Saving me with mighty hand
From the flood;
Having left the jasper throne,
Where His lovely presence shone,
My transgressions to atone
With His blood.

CII.

Then the euthanasiá
Overcame me, and I saw
Sights I cannot paint or draw
In detail;
Fancy's flight were slow to this
Soaring of the soul to bliss,
From the deep and dark abyss
Of the whale.

CIII.

I was wakened with a start,
Dreaming of my better part,
Leaning over with her heart
Full of love;
But it was the Doctor dear,
Coming down to see and hear
How I passed the watches drear,
From above.

CIV.

Oh, that night, my first at sea,
Haunts me still where'er I be,
And is creeping over me
While I write!
As the incubus, that crawls
At the dead of night, appals,
So the vision that recalls
Back that night.

CV.

Let the baleful phantom go,
So replete with wail and woe,
That my faculties may flow
Smoothly on;
And I cross myself three times,
Muttering some runic rhymes,
By the jingle of whose chimes
It is gone.

CVI.

Presto! let us now proceed
On our journey with God-speed,
For there's great and pressing need
To be spry,
Since I have so much to tell,
That I cannot always dwell
On each venture that befel
By-and-by.

CVII.

Though to morrow morn was bright,
Yet I couldn't sit up right,
For my head was rather light
And confused ;
Nor in sorrow could I find,
When I thought of those behind,
That reflection calmed my mind
When I mused.

CVIII.

What a bounty would I give
To have been content to live,
Without being a fugitive,
From my home !
For the freak that took my head
Made me now begin to dread
I should soon be left for dead
On the foam.

CIX.

Difficult it is to please
When we're living at our ease,
Until canker and disease
Seize their prey ;
Then it is that to our cost
Pleasures past are prized the most,
And we mourn for what is lost,
Once for aye.

CX.

The old Adam in the blood
Keeps us in a raging flood,
Without time to chew the cud
Of our toil;
And the current drives us on,
Though the prize be never won,
Till we quietly rest anon
In the soil.

CXI.

But to turn would never do,
For my neighbours would pooh-pooh,
And laugh quietly at me too
For my fright;
Better die than to be born
To endure their cruel scorn,
Better to be far forlorn
Day and night.

CXII.

It was just the same with me
As with lads who run to sea,
Though regretting there to be,
Yet their pride
Will prevent them to confess
Their mistake, and none the less,
That they suffer much distress
On the tide.

CXIII.

What of choice we may commit
We endure and stick to it,
Till it brings us to the pit
Of despair;
Which, if levied 'gainst our will,
We should never rest until
We got rid of such a chill
Bill of fare.

CXIV.

Much although we may regret
Our own indiscretions, yet
We prefer to fume and fret
Than to yield,
Till the hour whereon to cast
Lines afresh is ever past,
And we drift away at last
From the field.

CXV.

And though quite a city man,
In my veins the demon ran
Of a fiery stock and clan
Of renown;
Never, never, therefore, more
Would I view my native shore,
Till the world I would explore
Up and down.

CXVI.

Never more would I disgrace
The traditions of my race,
But the direst fate would face
Undismayed;
For their mantle I would fold
Round my breast to make me bold,
And of neither heat nor cold
Be afraid.

CXVII.

"Sentiment is only stuff"
You may say, but sure enough,
It was stuff so very tough
Once of old,
That in doubtful battle fray,
When the sword was bared to slay,
It gave strength to win the day
Times untold.

CXVIII.

What without it would be life,
With its worry, care and strife,
Save that for a maid or wife,
Kin or land,
Man will surely stand his bout,
Storm the fort and the redoubt,
And so fall or fight it out,
Sword in hand?

CXIX.

Then I felt my spirit rise
To pursue this enterprise,
With a purpose that defies
And outbraves
All the obstacles that may
Come across one on the way,
Travelling by land and spray
Of the waves.

CANTO THE SECOND.

I.

NEED I say that, once for all,
I threw off the horrid pall
That had wrapped me in its thrall
Of the night?
And I found myself, in short,
Almost half inclined to sport,
Gazing through my cabin port
With delight.

II.

For again came back to me
The old glamour of the sea,
Fascinating in degree
Beyond bound;
And I almost wished my last
Breath to mingle with the blast,
And to sail for ever past
The profound.

III.

There you see it stretching far,
Glittering without a scar
Or a blemish that could mar
Its calm brow;
As the mighty vessel stems
The wide fields of brilliant gems,
Like a wreath of diadems
Round her prow.

IV.

Such a scene was fit to raise
Contrite hearts to sing the praise
Of the great Creator's ways
In the deep;
Rousing now the stormy main,
With the wild, wild hurricane,
And then lulling all again
In deep sleep.

V.

Soon I ventured up on deck,
Though still feeble and a wreck,
Being determined not to check
My career;
And the ozone of the brine,
Mixed with fragrant iodine,
Quite restored this soul of mine
With good cheer.

VI.

And I laughed myself to scorn,
To observe how very worn
I got up one merry morn
From my bed;
And I fancied I could hear
Mary Anne's loud laughter clear,
In the buzzing that went sheer
Through my head.

VII.

The brown varnish round my glass
Gave a tincture as of brass
To my face, which never was
Very fair;
And reflection from the green,
Splashing waves of varied sheen,
Played upon my visage lean
With its glare.

VIII.

I had grown such heaps of hair,
That I knew not who or where
Was I, as I stood to stare
At myself;
And I deemed it passing strange,
That within so short a range
I had almost seemed to change
To an elf.

IX.

For my flesh was now so shrunk
To a shadow in my bunk,
That I looked more like a monk
Than a man;
And my visage grew so pale
By the tossing of the gale,
Like a gaol-bird out of gaol
Who had ran.

X.

But, ere many days were past,
I could eat and drink as fast
As a Jack before the mast
Could desire;
And could also walk the plank
Like an officer of rank,
Though as yet by far too lank
To admire.

XI.

When we reached remote Porte Saide,
There awhile the vessel stayed,
And ashore I went and strayed
Through the town;
And I own, to my regret,
That I gambled at roulette,
Till I lost bet after bet,
Like a clown.

XII.

Back I went with empty purse,
Which I had to reimburse,
And I almost breathed a curse,
To suppose
I should be so great a fool
As to hope to win the pool,
And be held in ridicule
At the close.

XIII.

We reached next the Bitter Lakes,
Where a host of buoys and stakes
Guided us, to save mistakes
Passing through ;
Here it was where Moses crossed,
Here where Pharaoh and his host
In the swelling waves were lost
Out of view.

XIV.

It was in the Great Canal
That we gave our maiden ball,
And invited great and small
All to come.
And mosquitoes gathered round
For the viands which they found,
And to hear the merry sound
Of the drum.

XV.

Marching forward in advance,
Captain Cates led off the dance,
With a merry sailor's glance
In his e'e;
While a matron graced his side,
Fat and fair and azure-eyed,
And they both commenced to glide
Merrilee.

XVI.

Danced away the maidens fair,
Danced the mashers that were there,
Danced mosquitoes in the air,
Buzzing round;
And he were a blatant beast
Who could not enjoy the least
The wild frolic of a feast
So renowned.

XVII.

Blow the trombone, beat the drum,
Blind young Cupid, come, oh, come!
Fling your arrows fast at some
Of the throng;
Shoot at random, never mind
Whose the eyes that you may blind,
And in happy wedlock bind
Them ere long.

XVIII.

But you naked, naughty boy,
Take good heed you don't destroy
Married couples' peace and joy
With your darts;
I but give you leave to shoot
Men and maidens fair to boot,
But take care you don't pollute
Matrons' hearts.

XIX.

Yon one's husband's far away
'Mong the jungles of Bombay,
Though the silly jade doth play
Fast and loose;
Shun her like a creeping snake,
For your own good honour's sake,
Neither follow in her wake,
Like a goose.

XX.

Cosy nooks were set aside,
Where the bachelors might hide,
Each with his intended bride,
In the dark;
Wooing there like cooing doves,
Taking off their white kid gloves,
Hand in hand to feel sweet love's
Sacred spark.

XXI.

Oh, the sips from ruby lips,
On these outward bounding ships,
Every other joy eclipse
Here below!
In the smack so superfine,
There's a *bouquet* so divine,
That excels the choicest wine
Of Bordeaux.

XXII.

Many pretty maids were there,
With complexions fresh and fair,
And their bosoms, oh, so bare
To the view;
Each engaged in giddy flight,
With the knave who held her tight,
To the joy and great delight
Of the two.

XXIII.

It was quite a brilliant sight
To behold their order bright,
Peuh! it's rather hot at night
Over here.
Never mind, we'll peuh and puff,
Though the heat is rather rough,
Till we all have got enough
Of good cheer.

XXIV.

Little Cupid, though unseen,
In his reckless way, I ween,
Flung about his arrows keen,
Without rest;
Ne'er was found a bosom proof,
That could hold itself aloof,
When he chose to weave the woof
Round the breast.

XXV.

Sound aloud that swelling strain,
Let us hear it once again,
For it tends to soothe one's pain
For a while;
Let me squeeze the hand once more
Of the maiden I adore,
Who has pierced my heart so sore
With her smile.

XXVI.

Though the hours are growing late,
Neither fleeting time nor fate
Can by any chance abate
My esteem;
So we whirl and round we go,
Till to morrow morning's glow,
Then we'll sleep and dance below
In a dream.

XXVII.

Marriage often came of this,
Sometimes something went amiss,
Ceased the sweet electric kiss
To inspire;
And that ecstasy of soul,
Which was burning like a coal,
Ere it reached the altar's goal,
Lost its fire.

XXVIII.

Many earnest vows were made
Underneath the awning's shade,
That, alas! were doomed to fade
As a cloud;
Or, perhaps, in future years,
Lead to unavailing tears,
And the bitter jibes and jeers
Of the crowd.

XXIX.

Egypt I left far behind,
As it suited not my mind
There to stay, lest they might find
Where I was;
For it seemed so near my home,
That I scarce could claim to roam,
Till I travelled field and foam
Without pause.

XXX.

True it is, its ruins grand
Shed their glory o'er the land
But so very near at hand,
That I thought
I would first sail right away
Far across the ocean's spray,
And my footsteps there let stray
As they ought.

XXXI.

For the other roving crew
Of globe-trotters, well I knew,
Were then flocking to review
The old route;
While I longed for farther change,
And more distant scenes and strange,
Out of mere globe-trotters' range
And pursuit.

XXXII.

For a time I would ignore
What so many tramped before,
Till I saw a great deal more
Shore and main;
But, perhaps, some other time,
I might by the Phœnix rhyme,
When I turned from distant clime
Back again.

XXXIII.

There were lots of fun on board,
When we got our souls restored,
Which I need not here record
In my book;
And some even got so gay,
That they travelled all the way,
With a smirk from day to day
On their look.

XXXIV.

There were bickerings, of course,
Sometimes there was something worse
Which might lead to some remorse
Later on;
But the others heeded not
What concerned this happy lot,
And we all of us forgot
Them anon.

XXXV.

And the captain, as we sailed,
Passing vessels often hailed,
In a language which I failed
To acquire;
For his flags and semaphore
Furnished him with ample lore
Of what happened on the shore
To transpire.

XXXVI.

Once a wag, by mischief led,
Signalled that Queen Anne was dead,
And we told him go to bed,
There to snore;
For we knew, as well as he,
The good Queen had ceased to be,
And so kept our course at sea
As before.

XXXVII.

Christmas was drawing nigh,
As we passed lone Perim by,
And were asked to send a pie
For its use.
And the favour, though absurd,
Not a soul on board demurred,
So we sent it, and a third
Of a goose.

XXXVIII.

Then they signalled whisky pegs,
And we sent a brace of kegs,
He were strong upon his legs
Who could stand;
And we then again set sail,
Having stopped the royal mail
To refresh and to regale
Perim's strand.

XXXIX.

Singing, dancing, spooning too,
Whist and nap and naughty loo,
Reading novels not a few,
Whiled the time ;
And when I was at a stand
What to do at my command,
Then I tried my 'prentice hand
Hard at rhyme.

XL.

And we sang so many songs
About lovers' rights and wrongs,
And the blessing that belongs
To the crew,
That I scarcely could refrain
From commencing love again,
And pretend to be a swain
Fain to woo.

XLI.

But the memory of dear
Mary Anne still kept me clear
From committing myself here
To a breach
Of the laws of all the land,
And that still more sacred band
That had bound us, heart and hand,
Like a leech.

XLII.

Oft was heard upon the gale
Plaintive warblings of the fair,
Quite enough to make one stare
In a trance;
And to swear obeisance meet,
Bend and worship at their feet,
Or e'en try and kiss their sweet
Countenance.

XLIII.

Sometimes, when we hoisted sail,
Music of a rougher scale
Poured upon the passing gale,
Ringing out;
And I heard a sailor's song
That I must remember long,
From the memories that throng
Thereabout.

XLIV.

On the taffrail late at night,
Sat a youth of talents bright,
Who could sing as well as fight
In the fray.
And around we sat to smoke,
Chat away and gaily joke,
Till at last the welkin woke
To his lay:—

KATE.

(A SAILOR'S BALLAD.)

1.

She was a clipper of a girl, young Kate,
Heave oh! rovers true;
With lines so fair and her stays so straight,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

2.

It was in the summer that I hailed my dear,
Heave oh! rovers true;
And shortened my sail as the maid drew near,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

3.

She straight hove-to as I flew my sign,
Heave oh! rovers true;
"A ship in distress of the LOVELORN LINE,"
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

4.

She tripped like a ship over rippling seas,
Heave oh ! rovers true ;
With all sails set to the noontide breeze,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh ! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh ! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

5.

Her bright eyes shone like the North Pole star,
Heave oh ! rovers true ;
The fountain and goal of her roving tar,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh ! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh ! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

6.

Little does he know of the joys of Jack,
Heave oh ! rovers true ;
Who never set sail on a maiden's track
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh ! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh ! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

7.

Oh, merrily, merrily would I roam,
Heave oh! rovers true;
With Kate for a bride on the wide sea foam,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

8.

was so timid and my love so shy,
Heave oh! rovers true;
Though nobody else know the reason why,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

9.

She looked like the model of a brand-new ship,
Heave oh! rovers true;
Striding the main on her maiden trip
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

10.

She dressed like a frigate in her snow-white sails,
Heave oh! rovers true;
Her voice was as sweet as the nightingale's,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

11.

Oh! Kate was the girl that her Jack loved best,
Heave oh! rovers true;
The fairest of maids in the fair, fair West,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

12.

We anchored together in TRUELOVE BAY,
Heave oh! rovers true;
And ever, ever since we have blest that day
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

13.

So here ends my story, my old ship's mate,
Heave oh! rovers true;
About my love affair with the fair maid Kate,
Over the ocean blue.
Heave oh! over the blue,
Sailing the ocean, calm and commotion,
Heave oh! Jack will be true
To Kate with a sailor's devotion.

XLV.

While the merry chorus roared,
Splash! Singwell fell overboard,
"Stop her!" all with one accord
Shouted out;
But before the ship could stop
I jumped over from the top,
And began to sprawl and grope
Round about.

XLVI.

I had never been to sea,
As I told you frank and free,
Before leaving Portsmouth quay
On my trip;
But in water fresh could swim,
From the bottom to the brim,
With dexterity of limb
And of grip.

XLVII.

All the ponds of London Town
I had traversed up and down,
Till I thought I couldn't drown
If I tried;
And had often done in sport,
As my friends could well report,
Nimble feats of this same sort
With some pride.

XLVIII.

All good sailors must agree
That a ship full speed at sea,
Cannot in a moment be
Made to stop;
And the vessel kept her way,
While upon the brine we lay,
Till there scarce was left a ray
Of good hope.

XLIX.

Though the night was rather clear,
As the nights full oft appear
At this merry time of year
In the East,
Still, since I did disembark,
I had floundered in the dark,
And could not make out my mark
In the least.

L.

Till a weary while passed by,
And I heard a rending cry
From a swimmer I could spy
In death's strife;
While his hands he upward threw,
As he disappeared from view,
Bidding his long last adieu
To his life.

LI.

Then my very best I tried
For his rescue from the tide,
Ere his body could subside
In the waste;
And I promptly turned him round
On his back, which I had found
Was the best way for the drowned
To be placed.

LII.

Then a hurried glance and short
I cast round me for some sort
Of a help that might support
Us and save;
And I saw a brilliant gem,
Like the star of Bethlehem,
Shining on the heaving stem
Of the wave.

LIII.

Beaming through the mirk of night,
Like a beacon burning bright,
There the life-buoy with its light,
I espied;
And I gathered what remained
Of my fading strength, and strained
Every nerve till we attained
To its side.

LIV.

Strayed the ship so far away,
That I feared she wouldn't stay,
And at times I couldn't say
Where she was;
For the undulating plain
Of the ever-restless main
Swung us up and down again
Without pause.

LV.

Till at last our light went out,
Leaving us in fear and doubt
How to find our whereabout
Without guide;
Yet I deemed it right and just,
Come what may, or come what must,
Never to betray my trust
Till I died.

LVI.

So I opened up his throat,
Held his drooping head afloat,
Hoping that to us a boat
Might repair;
But though boats came often near,
As my voice I couldn't clear,
They could neither see nor hear
Where we were.

LVII.

Thus the livelong night we spent
In this dire predicament,
While the boats at random went
To and fro;
Till the dappled dawn of day
Showed the spot whereon we lay,
And the ship could now survey
All our woe.

LVIII.

Need I say how we behaved?
How I swooned when we were saved?
How my young companion raved
In his speech?
How, in accents loud and clear,
All our shipmates gave a cheer,
As they saw us drawing near
Within reach?

LIX.

Then I bent my heart in praise
To the Ancient of Days,
For His dark mysterious ways
In the deep ;
And, as I was very tired,
For my cabin I inquired,
And was soon, as I desired,
Fast asleep.

LX.

So I slept that day and night
In a slumber exquisite,
Till tomorrow morning's light
Brightly shone ;
When I rose refreshed and calm
Out of sleep's restoring balm,
And I sang the Hundredth Psalm
All alone :
" *Ye people that on earth do dwell,*
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice," *etc.*

LXI.

Through the tropic waves we go,
Light of heart and void of woe,
Since our life is short, and no
One can say
What the coming morn may bring,
Joy or pain, or anything
That the viewless Fates may fling
In our way.

LXII.

That whatever is is best
Is a sacred truth and blest,
Though we oftentimes protest,
And in vain ;
For the human race was born
Now to laugh and now to mourn,
With the tares among the corn
And the grain.

LXIII.

Let us therefore take what comes,
Hope is worth a wealth of sums,
And effectively benumbs
Carking care ;
It will strengthen us when down,
Smile at vile Misfortune's frown,
And is much the noblest crown
We can wear.

LXIV.

It is well to moralise,
As it tends to make us wise,
And our grief to minimise
And subdue ;
To which mortals, one and all,
Are so subject since the Fall,
In whatever sphere or call
They pursue.

LXV.

Thus we travelled, full of hope,
Far from being disposed to grope,
Or in slavish fear to mope,
Or to quake;
And our spirits rather rose
Up to poetry from prose,
As we watched the ripples close
In our wake.

LXVI.

The wild wish to see the world
Through my very vitals whirled,
As you see an eddy swirled
Through the sand;
And the feeling grew and grew,
As we far and farther drew,
And were waiting for a view
Of the land.

LXVII.

And the flying-fish in chase
Followed at a flying pace,
And the dolphins tried the race,
But in vain;
For they failed to keep their speed,
As they wanted rest to feed,
So the goodship kept the lead
On the main.

LXVIII.

And the sharks, they gathered too,
Cruel monsters foul to view,
With their very mouths askew
In their head;
And so awkward to assail,
That they never can prevail,
Till they turn upon their tail
To be fed.

LXIX.

And the sun was sinking down,
Not in heath or bracken brown,
Nor in smoke of London Town,
But the flood;
And I often from my chair
Watched him quietly setting there,
Flushing the surrounding air
As with blood.

LXX.

The young ripples of the wave
Were disposed to misbehave,
Leaping up and down to lave
His fair brow;
And he often ducked his head
Down before his glory fled,
Then retired and went to bed
With a bow.

LXXI.

But there tarried on the way
Reminiscence of his sway
In the golden-tinted ray
Of the eve;
Till the gloaming slowly set,
Lingering and lingering yet,
As if seeming to regret
And to grieve.

LXXII.

Sitting in my easy chair,
Often have I pondered there,
And in glowing fancy stare
Through the gloom;
Peering into things unseen,
Far beyond the globe's demesne,
And the shadows and the screen
Of the tomb.

LXXIII.

What will come when life is past?
Shall we mingle with the blast,
Or but crumble down at last
Into nought?
Shall this glowing essence wane
Into nothingness again,
And renounce the proud domain
Of its thought?

LXXIV.

Cogitations of this kind
Took possession of my mind
As the evening declined
On the scene;
Till the dinner bell went round,
And awoke me with its sound
From my reveries profound
And serene.

LXXV.

Then cried I in grief and pain:
"Man is dust, and must sustain
Life by eating corn and grain
From the sod;"
When a voice made low reply:
"Man must eat and drink and die,
And thereafter rise on high
To his God."

LXXVI.

We shall only fall to rise
With fresh vigour to the skies,
As the sunshine fades and dies
During night;
To appear upon the morn
On its lofty pinions borne,
To refresh and to adorn
With its light.

LXXVII.

It was during one of these
Think-aloud soliloquies,
That alone I sat at ease,
Dreaming stuff;
When they found me singing some
Rubbish in a sort of hum,
Which received the synonym
Of the "Puff."

THE PUFF, OR THE FRAGRANT FIGMENT.

1.

Propitious breezes prevail
To carry us over the brine,
And I to the breath of the gale
My cares and my sorrows resign;
And out of my memory blow them afar,
In puffs that ascend from my soothing cigar.

2.

Puff! pleasant it is, to be sure,
To lie on the broad of one's back,
And blow the aroma so pure
In curls on the lengthening track
That severs and sunders the further we go
Apart in the flesh—but in spirit? oh no!

3.

Puff! pleasant it is in the dark
To sit in a corner alone,
And never to hear a remark
Save only these puffs of your own;
Till Fancy unfettered runs riot at last,
To conjure up scenes that are buried and past.

4.

Puff! pleasant, as most people say,
To puff, leaning over the side,
And watch the green, showery spray
Dispersing away on the tide;
And see the young flying-fish cleaving the air,
And bottle-nosed porpoises racing us fair.

5.

Puff! pleasant, when dinner is done,
To sit on the taffrail at night,
And listen to jargon of none,
But witness the glimmering light
That follows along in our luminous wake,
Like tail of a comet or trail of a snake.

6.

Puff! pleasant, when all is so still,
Save only the spin of the screw,
And, strictly forbidden to fill
Your pipe, to refill it anew,
And gather the wandering thoughts of your brain,
And rock them to sleep in their cradle again.

7.

Puff! pleasant to smoke a cheeroot,
But only enough at a time,
And such is, beyond a dispute,
As true of the puff of a rhyme;
Puff! puff!! and without any further delay
I take my cheeroot and I chuck it away.

LXXVIII.

"Land ahead!" I heard a tar
Shouting out, and there, afar
The lone coast of Malabar
I espied
On the vessel's starboard bow,
Skirting the horizon low,
And scarce reared above the flow
Of the tide.

LXXIX.

There at last was Hindustan!
With her millions dark and tan,
That I came so far to scan
And to spy;
And I quietly took my stand,
With my spying-glass in hand,
To survey this famous land
Of Quohai.

LXXX.

The effect was pleasing too,
As the hills appeared in view,
Though of somewhat lurid hue
To behold;
Besides, anything that's strange
Is so welcome for a change,
To a mind disposed to range
Uncontrolled.

LXXXI.

Now, to make my story short,
I must haul my ship to port
Just outside the ruined fort
Of the town;
And as all felt very gay,
So we cheered "Hip, hip, hooray!"
As the ship in far Bombay
Anchored down.

CANTO THE THIRD.

I.

In commencing Flight the Third,
Oh, my soul ! be nobly stirred
Not to laugh at things absurd
Or obscene ;
But to always tell the truth,
Such as I was taught in youth,
With a spirit more of ruth
Than of spleen.

II.

What a noise the natives made
Soon as e'er the vessel stayed,
Shouting like a whole brigade
Of dragoons ;
But they looked so very black,
With no garments on their back,
That they seemed more like a pack
Of baboons.

III.

"*Jeldi äo*," quickly come,
"Oh, yon *bandra!*" shouted some,
"*Soor* and *loocha, jäo ek dum*,"
And such style,
Made so much confounded roar,
Swelled by many a chorus more,
That I felt both sick and sore
For a while.

IV.

Till a little time did lapse,
When I saw my patent traps,
And my other rugs and wraps,
Snapped away;
Which my temper much did rile,
And I told the rascals vile
I ain't used to this 'ere style
Of foul play.

V.

"Master *Sab*, my boat is nice,
Me today no eating rice,
Master, give me little pice,
One rupee."
"Master, no, that man tell lie,
My good boat *bōt achcha hai*,
Master please will come and try,
Master see."

VI.

To a quiet and peaceful man,
How his horrid jargon ran!
Till my very ears began
To complain;
And I saw my bags and coats
In as many divers boats,
While their fiendish, jarring throats
Yelled again.

VII.

So I shouted, so did they
Shout and shriek, and yell and bray,
Just like fiends let out a day
From the pit;
Till, I taught them, once for all,
Notwithstanding all their brawl,
They had better at my call
To submit..

VIII.

Then the parting—oh, my heart!
Sad, indeed, it is to part,
Just as we are going to start,
Full of woe;
Till by settling down again
In the slow mofussil train,
By degrees our sorrows wane
As we go.

IX.

Before going I went round
Just to see what could be found
In the city so renowned
Of Bombay;
And was greatly pleased to find
That it suited much my mind,
In its almost every kind
Of display.

X.

There the Bay itself, whose fame
Is coequal to its name;
And 'twere hard the man to blame
Who applied
Such a name to such a place,
Through its many miles of space,
And the grand majestic grace
Of its tide.

XI.

To enhance the pleasant scene,
Glittering in silver sheen,
Verdant isles enough, I ween,
Gaily stood;
And the Elephanta Cave,
With its ruined architrave,
That a thousand years did brave
Gale and flood!

XII.

Down throughout the Cave I went,
Full of awe and wonderment,
And a lonely hour I spent
In its gloom;
Which was fit enough to raise
Spirits of the ancient days,
To commune in word and phrase
From the tomb.

XIII.

Effigies without a head
My imagination led
Back to contemplate the dead
For a while;
And the statues without nose
Seemed to speak in grim repose,
Their foul mutilating foes
To revile.

XIV.

Oh, thou vile iconoclast,
Base destroyer of the past!
What will come of you at last,
In the end?
Though Bombay is rather hot,
Hotter still will be your lot,
In that burning, boiling pot
Where you tend.

XV.

Each suspended stalactite
Told the tale of ages' flight,
As the weird and sombre light
Glimmered slow;
And I groped my way about,
Till I heard a ghostly shout,
Then I turned and hurried out
From below.

XVI.

After that, in many caves
And the dead men's tombs and graves
Both of holy men and knaves,
Oft I went;
But must not describe them all,
Sure enough that it might pall
On good taste, and that your gall
Might resent.

XVII.

When I reached above the ground,
And myself in safety found,
There I sat and gazed around,
Waxing bold;
And I saw the mountains rise,
Towering to meet the skies,
Very pleasing for my eyes
To behold.

XVIII.

The high hills of Matheran
In the distance I could scan,
Where great city merchants ran
From the plain;
To relieve their minds a bit,
When finances might permit,
And to make them further fit
Once again.

XIX.

Many ships at anchor rode,
With their pinions furled and stowed
Neatly round their spars abroad
On the gale;
With the ensigns of their land
Floating high above the strand,
So that one might understand
Whence they hail.

XX.

Which is which and what is what
Are but simple questions that
One may easily guess at
Very well;
For yon sleek and graceful side
Claims for parentage the Clyde,
And there Mersey's latest pride
Rides the swell

XXI.

There the Glen and Anchor Lines,
Which their flag so well defines,
Fit to carry great divines
O'er the spray;
Even though a storm is sure
To pursue these prelates pure,
And sea-sickness without cure
Sues their way.

XXII.

Surely those are P. and O.;
There is something in their show
Which you cannot fail to know
When you see;
And the British India fleet,
Every whit as trim and neat,
Are there lying as complete
As can be.

XXIII.

But all nations find a place
In this haven fair of grace,
And I needn't further trace
In detail
How they wander to and fro,
Where the shifty breezes blow,
With their snow-white sails let flow
On the gale.

XXIV.

Next I sought the Masons' Hall,
Where the Duke received a call
For presiding over all
Brothers true;
And I banquetted and laughed
With the members of the Craft,
And in moderation quaffed
Mountain dew.

XXV.

Having first put out the light,
Then we conjured up the sprite,
Whipped him well from left to right
Round the floor;
And then clapped him in his chain,
And we buried him again,
In his cavern to remain
As before.

XXVI.

Many things we said and did
Which must be for ever hid,
And the Heavens high forbid
And forfend,
That from me should ever slip
Sign or token or the grip
Of the mystic fellowship,
Till the end.

XXVII.

And we sang a merry song,
With a chorus loud and long,
Which was nothing very wrong,
I maintain;
And our poet made a neat
Ditty that was quite a treat,
And I may as well repeat
It again:—

THE SONG OF THE BOMBAY FREEMASONS.

(*To the Tune of "Grand Old Hiram."*)

1.

We brothers true who assemble this eve
In bonds of a union that's binding,
Rejoice when we meet, as in parting we grieve,
When time that our watches were winding;
But early or late, when we meet or we part,
Constant and pure be the tune of our heart.

CHORUS:—*But early or late, etc.*

2.

We build, and our building is steadfast and sure,
On ground that endureth for ever,

Each part and the whole being united secure,
That none can remove them or sever;
And, long as the pillars of heaven shall last,
Our mansion shall brave the rude rage of the blast.

CHORUS:—*And long as the pillars, etc.*

3.

Our mystery leaps over mountains and seas,
Nor rank, race nor region can bind it,
But such as believe in eternal decrees
May hope in due season to find it;
Being honest and pure and of blameless renown,
But never a knave or a slavish dull clown.

CHORUS:—*Being honest and pure, etc.*

4.

For ours is no league of a dastardly crew,
Conspiring to maim and to mangle,
But joint fellow-labourers faithful and true,
By plumb, level-plain, and rectangle;
And so may our conduct for ever remain
Square, upright and plain, without wrinkle or stain.

CHORUS:—*And so may our conduct, etc.*

5.

We fervently aim at the reign of good will,
And brotherly service to render;
The poor to relieve, and to heal with our skill
The hearts that are wounded and tender;
And wishing God-speed to the world, one and all,
We stand by the truth without fear of a fall.

CHORUS:—*And wishing God-speed, etc.*

XXVIII.

"*Primis Urbs in Indis*" *est*
Far the fairest and the best
With which Hindustan is blest
For a town;
But it wants, upon the whole,
Something to exalt the soul,
And the broken heart console
When it's down.

XXIX.

For the only public park
Is not worth a Scottish mark,
Nor resorted to by dark
Nor by fair;
And the flowers there that grow,
Pale and sapless bud and blow,
Or but waste their hectic glow
On the air.

XXX.

Wandering about its ground,
A museum there I found,
"Museum!" quoth I, turning round,
"That's a treat;
Here I'll ramble like a child,
Viewing Nature's products wild,
Nor be any more beguiled
By a cheat."

XXXI.

Though a cheat the gardens were,
This was still a greater snare,
Ne'er an object fair or rare
Could I see;
But a shop of bric-à-brac,
That all comeliness did lack,
And the whole not worth a plack
Or baubee.

XXXII.

Turning back in some disgust
At this lack of *bundobust*,
Which was righteous and just
On my side,
And being rather in a fidge,
I sought out the rocky Ridge
That surveys each block and bridge
Far and wide.

XXXIII.

There I took my stand again,
To observe the whole domain,
Which was lying very plain
To my view;
And was now no longer grieved
To perceive what I perceived,
Which was more than I believed
To be true.

XXXIV.

There the panorama lay
In its fascinating sway,
Right before me to the Bay
And beyond;
And the fields of verdant palm
Seemed to breathe a fragrant balm,
And the sea was quiet and calm
As a pond.

XXXV.

Land and sea in concert vied
Where the mountains and the tide
With their bounty beautified
The demesne;
While the handicraft of man,
Masts and spires of lofty span,
Vied to variegate the plan
Of the scene.

XXXVI.

The resplendent globe of fire,
Which the heathen so admire,
Was beginning to retire
For the day;
Throwing out, in shadows bold,
The environs of the wold,
Magnified a thousandfold
By the way.

XXXVII.

The fair vision seemed to me
Beautiful beyond degree,
As the sunshine flushed the sea
From behind;
And I felt in musing mood,
Which a sight like this will brood,
For the comfort and great good
Of mankind.

XXXVIII.

Then I took my spying-glass,
To observe what came to pass
On the shingle and the grass
By the shore;
Where the heathen, one by one,
When their daily task is done,
Bow before the setting sun
They adore.

XXXIX.

Fond of ostentation wide,
Mussulmans on Allah cried,
Hoping to be well espied
All around;
While devotional Parsees,
Scouting all hypocrisies,
Prostrated their stubborn knees
On the ground.

XL.

"Yonder massive pile," thought I,
"In the distance that I spy,
Has been built by some old Guy,
To be sure;
Hoping heaven to attain,
By bequeathing all his gain,
To relieve the stress and pain
Of the poor."

XLI.

In the middle of this thought—
Caw! the crows came round the spot,
With a human skull they brought
In their claws;
And the sight of it and touch,
Having never handled such,
Made me wonder very much
Whose it was.

XLII.

Then the skull made known to me
It belonged to Merwanjee,
Quite a notable Parsee
Who was dead;
And whose body thin and worn,
By the ravens had been torn,
Till at last they got it shorn
Of its head.

XLIII.

Then said I, "What place is that
Where the gloating vultures squat?"
"Oh," the skull said, "you know what,
I suppose;
That's the Tow'r of Silence where
Dead Parsees are laid so bare,
To provide a sumptuous fare
For the crows."

XLIV.

"Tow'r of Silence!" I cried out;
"That it is without a doubt,
Judging from the noise and shout
Which I hear;
Tow'r of Babel would be more
In accordance with the roar
Which the kites and vultures pour
On my ear.

XLV.

" And for you who worship fire,
Surely the bright funeral pyre
Should be more of your desire
In the end;
So that when you ceased to burn,
All your ashes in an urn
To your progeny in turn
Might descend."

XLVI.

" Well," said he, " that might be true
From a Christian's point of view,
But for us 'twould never do,
By our creed,
To dissolve in smoke and air,
While the vultures wanted fare,
And we had enough to spare
For their need.

XLVII.

" Zoroastrians are we,
Zealous in a high degree
To observe our faith's decree
Day and night;
Whether thus to feed a crow,
To relieve from stress and woe,
Or whatever else we know
To be right.

XLVIII.

"Though you laugh at us in scorn,
'Tis as noble to be torn
And on lofty pinions borne
Round and round,
As to feed the sateless maw
Of the worms that cannot caw,
And can only dig and gnaw
Underground."

XLIX.

"Tell," said I, "oh, truly tell!
What is that huge tank or well,
Where the grimy vultures dwell
So secure?"
"Goodness gracious!" said he,
"What a griffin you must be
Not to know the tanks you see,
To be sure!

L.

"'Tis the drinking water sweet,
Duly seasoned with the meat
Which the vultures cannot eat
At the Tow'r;
Where you sometimes see them drop
Reeking fids of human chop
That they haven't time to stop
And devour."

LI.

Then I shuddered at the thought
Such a state of things should not
Be corrected, as it ought
To be done;
And I fancied that a day
Might come over great Bombay,
When the pestilence would slay
Every one.

LII.

"Very shocking!" I replied,
And I turned myself aside,
To descry what I descried
Near the shore;
And I pointed here and there,
Asking questions fit and fair,
Which the skull could well declare
As before.

LIII.

"Which," said I, "of piles that grace
The fair city, is the place
Which the mighty British race
Must have built
For the sick and wounded tars
Who may fall from lofty spars,
Or whose blood in crimson wars
May be spilt?"

LIV.

"'Tain't that you're looking at."
"Well, if not, it must be that."
"That's the Secretariat
That you spy,
Where they keep the musty books
At which no one ever looks,
Or disturbs them from the nooks
Where they lie."

LV.

"Where they keep the precious page
Of the thoughts of byegone age?"
"Fiddlesticks!" the skull in rage
Made reply;
"Nothing there you'll ever find,
Save some rubbish of a kind
That is seldom worth to bind
Or to buy."

LVI.

"Every scribbler seems to have
'Honour to be' humble slave
To some other greater knave
Than himself;
And no wonder, I'm afraid,
That the writings are so staid,
As to be for ever laid
On the shelf."

LVII.

"Tell me, skull, oh! tell me true,
Where should I direct my view
To observe the rendezvous
Full of skill,
Where the gallant British Jack,
When he's laid upon his back,
Must be treated without lack
Of good will?"

LVIII.

"There, you see it near the shore,
Only barracks and no more,
That were used in years of yore
For a shed;
And where cockroaches abound
In battalions all around,
And where rats are to be found
Live and dead."

LIX.

Then a patriotic blush
Flushed my cheeks and all was hush,
Save the wild ungoverned rush
Of my blood;
When I thought my country's pride,
Who are wont to roam the tide,
Should have perished thus and died
'Cross the flood.

LX.

Without telling my left hand
Aught of what my right one planned,
I ransacked my pockets and
Found a place,
Where I wrote an order down
On my bankers up in town,
To redeem the fair renown
Of my race.

LXI.

For a hospital, in short,
Worthy of so great a port,
Where the sailors could resort
In their pain,
When they languished from their home,
Far across the ocean's foam,
In their eagerness to roam
O'er the main.

LXII.

Here a vulture in his claws
Caught the skull, and off he was,
While a thousand crows and caws
Hotly pressed;
Till he dropped it in the tank,
From which all the people drank,
Where it settled down and sank
To its rest.

LXIII.

"Fie for shame!" I blurted out,
"This must not be talked about,"
And I traced my wayward route
With a sigh;
Down through Kalbedevie Road,
Where the natives walk abroad,
So as much to incommode
Passers-by.

LXIV.

In this crowded thoroughfare
I discovered a more rare,
Varied group than anywhere
I went through;
Jews and Gentiles of all grades,
And of quite as divers shades,
Following the countless trades
They pursue.

LXV.

Tinpot-hooded, sleek Parsees,
Fierce and fiery Afghanese,
Arabs from across the seas,
Meek Hindoos,
Seediboys from Afric's shore,
Chinamen from Signapore,
And as many rascals more
As you choose.

LXVI.

To make mention of the lot
Is a task that, well I wot,
Would require a polyglot
Tongue and pen ;
And I'm not so certain sure
That my choice nomenclature
Would immortal praise secure,
Even then.

LXVII.

Who has read the list of ships
Launched by Homer from the slips,
And has ever smacked his lips
With delight,
Or in ecstasy of soul,
As he wended through the whole
Of that lengthy rigmarole
Over night !

LXVIII.

But the list of them were short,
And might well be counted sport,
When compared with every sort
Of a tribe
I would mention in my book,
At which none would ever look
Without censure and rebuke
For the scribe.

LXIX.

Some of them were nigh as bare
As was Adam, ere the snare
Of the pippin made him stare
In his shame;
While some others had a shawl
Round their loins, and that was all
Of the blessings of the Fall
They could claim.

LXX.

One dark rogue came up to me,
In a flowing gown, to see
If I'd buy some filigree
Neat and good;
And I noticed in his pack
Quite a curious knick-knack,
Which I wanted to bring back
If I could.

LXXI.

When I asked about the price,
The old Borah in a trice
Answered it was very nice,
And so cheap;
Just a hundred rupees,
For this piece of filigrees,
Which the master, if it please
Him, might keep.

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LXXII.

"Go to Timbuctoo!" I burst,
"I would see you jiggered first!"
While some others would have curst
The vile rogue,
Who would wish to cheat me clean,
As he saw that I was green,
From the manner of our 'tween
Dialogue.

LXXIII.

"Fifty!" I exclaimed outright,
To annoy him just for spite,
But the knave was too polite
To refuse;
And I paid my fifty down
For a thing not worth a crown,
Even if he gave his gown
And his shoes.

LXXIV.

Yet another was for sale
On a more expensive scale,
And I wanted to curtail
Avarice.
But the vagabond demurred,
Saying it was quite absurd
When I offered him a third
Of the price.

LXXV.

"Have a tosh!" at last he cried,
"Done with you," this child replied;
"And we'll both of us abide
Sudden death."
Then I gave a coin a flick,
Thumped it on the pavement, slick,
And the Borah won the trick
In a breath.

LXXVI.

Though I saw that I was done,
Yet I quite enjoyed the fun,
For experience is won
By degrees;
And I wended home that day,
Through the tumult of Bombay,
Feeling lighter on the way
Of rupees.

LXXVII.

The magician's piping strain
Caught my ear once more again,
And I tried, but quite in vain,
All my might,
To make out, in whole or part,
How he plied his magic art,
Which so often made me start
At its sight.

LXXVIII.

When the juggler wished to jug,
He would spread his juggler's rug,
And then "dug a dug a dug,"
He would say;
When his puppets, one and all,
From their basket, bag or shawl,
Would in answer to his call
Crawl and play.

LXXIX.

Trees would grow where there were none,
Serpents dance away like fun,
And such curious tricks were done
Then and there,
That it looked as if the flow'rs,
Mango trees and leafy bow'rs
Were connected with dark pow'rs
Of the air.

LXXX.

After that I only stayed
Just to see Lord Reay arrayed
In the sporran, kilt and plaid
Of his clan;
Toots, maun! and he looked so grand
In the costume of his land,
That I shook him by the hand
Like a man.

LXXXI.

Nothing here was done by halves,
For his calves were like Suaves',
Looking more like cows than calves
In their show ;
Since he got the Pope's decree,
To wear ankles at the knee,
And the calves where those should be,
Down below.

LXXXII.

Satisfied with what I saw,
Though not quite without a flaw,
I determined to withdraw
From the plain ;
And I parted with regret
With the wonders that I met
In the handsome city set
On the main.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

I.

How I wandered after that,
Where I made my habitat,
And the history of what
I explored,
With the daily notes I took
In my memorandum book,
Would require a Pentateuch
To record.

II.

Where the rail went, there went I,
Where it failed I said good-bye,
Travelled plains and mountains high,
Sea and land;
Sometimes rocked in *tonga dăk*,
On the weary footsore track,
Or at times on camel's back,
Through the sand.

III.

Pleasant sure it was to climb
Up the mountain heights sublime,
Humming to myself in rhyme
As I went;
And to watch the fire-horse bound
Over height and depth profound,
Snorting as it whisked around
The ascent.

IV.

When I crossed the lofty range
Of the Ghauts, I felt the change
Acting in a manner strange
On my skin;
There was muggy, moist Bombay,
Where I sweltered all the day,
This was Poonah bright and gay
I was in.

V.

All declared how great and proud
Poonah was, as all allowed,
In the season, when the crowd
Trip and throng;
Whirling through the giddy dance,
Hearts askew and eyes askance,
While young Cupid hurled his lance
All along.

VI.

It was here I told the Duke
I was going to write a book,
Where I would reserve a nook
For his name;
And would tell his mammy too,
All about him that I knew,
In my coming interview
With the same.

VII.

"Well," said he, "remember that
You will tell her in a chat
All about the lofty Ghaut
Where I dwell;
And that seldom on the plain
Have I reason to complain,
And the chickens all remain
Very well.

VIII.

"But before you go," he said,
"We must have a big parade,
Where you'll see the strength arrayed
Of our arms;
How we'd beat the Muscovite,
If they met us in the fight,
And in panic put to flight
Their rude swarms."

IX.

So he said, and it was done
On that noted afternoon,
When the rifle and big gun,
Lance and sword,
Column, *échelon* and line,
Right-about and left incline,
Showed their warlike discipline
To each word.

X.

They went forward to retreat,
As the one the other beat,
Which was chivalrous and meet
To suppose ;
Courage being of small account,
Though they say it is the fount
From which soldiers will surmount
Their grim foes.

XI.

This was quite a treat to me,
Who was overjoyed to see
White and brown combined to be
Hand in hand,
In adjacent rank and row
To repel the arrant foe,
Who should dare his nose to show
In the land.

XII.

Oh, the bear, the grisly bear!
Better snivel in his lair,
Lest we make him dance a rare
Bearish jig;
And so dress him like a clown,
To march round about the town,
Pirouetting up and down
In full fig.

XIII.

By the Pow'rs! the dust they raised
Was enough to make one dazed,
And the cannons, how they blazed
Into space!
Routing hosts that weren't seen,
Storming forts with dauntless mien,
Just as if their foes had been
Face to face.

XIV.

When at last in line they wheeled
On the wide and open field,
After showing how to wield
Their bright arms,
I felt confident and sure
Pessimists could not endure,
As the sight was quite a cure
For alarms.

XV.

Finally, the grand march past
Was a sight that ought to last
In my recollection fast
Evermore;
As each fair and gallant crew,
Flying the red, white and blue,
Passed before me in review,
Corps by corps.

XVI.

But the thing that won my heart,
Above every other part,
Was the way so very smart
And precise,
Without labouring or fret,
Only just a little sweat,
They went through the bayonet
Exercise.

XVII.

"Ha!" cried I, "close quarters still,
And the British lion's skill
His antagonist will kill,
As of yore;
When like hurricane through smoke
Through the enemy he broke,
Who could not withstand the shock
Of his roar.

XVIII.

Flashed like lightning on my mind
Heights of Alma's rugged grind,
When the flower of mankind,
Stout and brave,
Hoisted up the British flag
On the summit of the crag,
In the place of the rag-tag
Of the Slav(e).

XIX.

"None but Highland bonnets here
Seemed to rumble in my ear,
With a music that was dear
To my soul;
And I thought that even I,
With the pibroch sounding high,
My untutored hand might try
To control.

XX.

By-and-by, it came to pass,
That I found myself, alas!
In benighted old Madras
For a stage;
While a hurricane did roar
On the Coromandel shore,
And the breakwater it tore
In its rage.

XXI.

Though the tempest howled and hissed
I was bound to keep my tryst,
But the Governor I missed
While I stayed;
He was settling some dispute
With civilians of repute,
Who were hopelessly pollute
In their grade.

XXII.

"Lah!" said I, "can this be true,
That the smart civilian crew
Must destroy the credit due
To their place?
In Bengal, Madras, Bombay,
Notwithstanding all their pay,
Brib'ry 's th' order of the day
And disgrace."

XXIII.

One of them must sell degrees,
Not for scholars' modest fees,
But for bags of foul rupees
In the dark;
While another squire is caught
In disguise, with slouching hat,
Fleeing to some port whereat
To embark.

XXIV.

Yet another, it is said,
Wanted much to go to bed,
But no more upon this head
Shall I say;
For to say the very least,
Scraps are better than a feast
Of such morally deceased
Beasts of prey.

XXV.

Then a voice seemed low to sound:
"Look around you, look around,
If corruption can be found
Only there."
And the sight that seemed to rise
Struck me with such great surprise,
That I covered both my eyes
From its glare.

XXVI.

Put away th' accursèd thing
From among you, lest it bring
Ruin on the very being
Of your fame;
And the sins of but a few
Should reflect on others too,
Who behave both staunch and true
To their name. ..

XXVII.

Up and down, through court and lane,
Here I wandered once again,
As I never could remain
Long at rest;
Just to while the hours away,
Of the long, long Indian day,
During which my forced delay
Sorely pressed.

XXVIII.

City of the dead-alive,
Little can it grow or thrive,
Where the citizens contrive
To mistake
Life for slumber and for sleep,
Like so many sluggish sheep,
Without energy to keep
Them awake.

XXIX.

Like the spouse who found his wife
An "enigma" all his life,
Even so Madras is rife
With profound
Allegories deep and grand,
Which but few can understand,
And require a master-hand
To expound.

XXX.

Dwelling of delusive blight,
Both confounding sense and sight,
For thy *Roads* are but a bight
Of the sea,
On which none can ever ride,
Save the ships that ride the tide,
Swinging by their anchors' side
To be free.

XXXI.

"Any harbour in a storm"
Should be cast to feed the worm,
As a proverb more of form
Than of sense.
Here it isn't sense at all,
Rather nonsense I should call,
When begins to blow the squall
Dark and dense.

XXXII.

For thy harbour's but a port
To which ships will not resort,
When the gale begins to snort
And to roar;
But prefer by far to flee
To the wild and open sea,
Rather than be doomed to be
Cast ashore.

XXXIII.

But due praises must be made,
For Madras, though void of trade,
Can yet boast an esplanade
And a strand;
And museum full and flush
Of rare specimens—but, hush!
Lest I make Bombayites blush
Where they stand.

XXXIV.

Great Calcutta claimed a share
Of such time as I could spare,
And is worth the rover's care
Passing through;
For, so far as hands of man
Are concerned, it holds the van
Of all towns of Hindustan,
Old or new.

XXXV.

True it is that Nature wild
Claims not here a wayward child,
For the landscape is but mild
Of the land;
Nor do sunset's golden rays
Set the sea and sky ablaze,
As in ocean-born Bombay's
Favoured strand.

XXXVI.

Yet it might be briefly shown
That some beauties of its own
It possesses, to atone
For a lot;
Such as richness of the soil,
To bring forth both corn and oil,
With the least amount of toil
And of thought.

XXXVII.

E'en the Ganges' sacred stream
Of itself might well redeem
Scenes that otherwise might seem
Dull and tame;
And so kindle and inspire
With a spark of poet's fire,
To take up the sounding lyre
To its fame.

XXXVIII.

I resolved to see the "Zoo,"
Where the beasts are not a few,
But a very comic crew
In their way.
Each, according to its kind,
Fitted to instruct the mind,
There in plenty you will find
Night and day.

XXXIX.

Grinning monkeys, grisly bears,
Polls and cockatoos in pairs,
Lions crouching in their lairs,
Stern and mute;
Every fish and flesh and fowl,
Swim and fly and shriek and howl,
While at dusk you hear the owl
Howl and hoot.

XL.

Later on I also went
To the Gardens, where I spent
Many hours in calm content
And repose;
Studying with thoughtful care,
And with philosophic air,
All the science there was there
To disclose.

XLI.

It seemed also fit to me,
I should not neglect to see
The old, famous Banyan tree
Where it spread;
And I stretched my legs, and laid
Underneath its awning shade,
Arching like a great arcade
Overhead.

XLII.

The proud ships that lined the strand
Were the pick of every land,
With their masts projecting grand
Up the sky.
None of your foul ditchers here,
But great ships with sailing gear,
That more handsome far appear
To the eye.

XLIII.

Statued heroes might be seen
Here and there upon the green,
Looking very fierce and keen
For the fray;
Worthy men of mark and name,
As their deeds can well proclaim,
Who once wielded power and fame
In their day.

XLIV.

Where was now the famed Black Hole
Of Calcutta, whence the soul
Of our kindred sought the goal
Of the sky,
In the days when Suraj-u-
Dowlah and his cruel crew
In the fœtid hole down threw
Them to die?

XLV.

It possesses still the dead,
The dead letters be it said,
For 'tis here the postal head
Office stands;
The dead letter office now
Is that dungeon dark and low,
Where dead-letters down they throw
With their hands.

XLVI.

What a musty smell was there
When I left the upper air,
And descended to the lair
Far from day!
Letters breathing life and love,
Of a time when up above,
Were now mouldy as a glove
Cast away.

XLVII.

"*Transit gloria mundi*," I
Then repeated with a sigh,
"Thus, alas! we all pass by
To our doom;
Burning now with high intent,
Now with toil and passion spent,
Till our steps anon are bent
To the tomb."

XLVIII.

And I counted it no sin
To look up Lord Dufferin,
As I panted to begin
And debate
On the labyrinths and coils
Of the diplomatic foils,
And the torsions and turmoils
Of the State.

XLIX.

How it needed tact and pain,
With light hand upon the rein,
Peace with honour to maintain
Where and when;
How he cuddled, hummed and hawed
With the foul Slavonic squad,
And poor Theebaw how he clawed
In his den.

L.

Then said I, "My noble lord,
They will soon despise our word,
If they doubt our doughty sword
Can prevail
Save against untutored foes,
Brave enough and bellicose,
But so rude that goodness knows
They must fail.

LI.

"To make use of such a throng
As a buffer 'tween the strong,
Shows there's something very wrong
In the State.
If we wanted much to prance,
And in war-paint strut and dance,
Why on earth not go at France
Fair and straight?

LII.

"If we fear to face the foe,
Then our glory soon must go,
And, alack-a-day and woe
To the land,
That we always love so dear,
And devoted year to year,
Whether far away or near
To its strand!

LIII.

"I'm afraid the famed John Bull
Needs a "y" to make him full,
If he chooses such a rule
For his life;
To behave like cringing sneak,
When the Polar Bear would squeak,
While he tempts the frail and weak
Into strife.

LIV.

"Can we cry 'Our God and right'
When we mingle in the fight,
And so pitilessly smite
Weaker men,
'Stead of catching by the nose
Our inexorable foes,
Who are sure to come to blows
Now or then?"

LV.

"Well," said he, "I can't deny
But your motives may be high,
Till you get your hand to try
At this game;
For in statecraft's wily art,
Were it e'en against your heart,
You would have to act your part
Just the same."

LVI.

"Out," cried I, "upon the knaves
Who would make the world their slaves!
Let my bulldogs and my braves
At their throat,
Till the rabble get their hide
Basted to take down their pride,
And *peccavi* they have cried,
As they ought."

LVII.

Many secrets of the State
Did the Viceroy then relate,
In this famous *tête-à-tête*
Of the two.
But as he was so polite
As to open up my sight,
So I promised not to write
A review.

LVIII.

Here is now Chiringee Road,
And the Eden Gardens broad,
But 'tis time that I should nod
And retire;
You have heard enough from me,
Gentle reader, go and see
For yourself what else there be
To admire.

LIX.

Town of Palaces, farewell,
Where I go I cannot tell,
Up the mountain, down the dell
As my fall;
But I wish glad hearts to praise,
Less of sunny, scorching rays,
And a length of happy days
To you all.

LX.

Just before I took my leave,
I observed a young man grieve,
While I saw his shoulders heave
With a sigh;
And I heard the sorry tale
That he poured upon the gale,
And I listened to the wail
Of his cry:—

A SUNBURNT SOLILOQUY.

1.

Ah! why did I promise my maiden,
Before I set sail on the brine,
With heart heavy, weary, and laden,
That soon I would claim her as mine?
Though blither than linnet or starling
Is, oh! my sweet charmer to me,
Yet how can I send for my darling
On twelvepenny farthing rupee?

2.

I'll write to her father, and tell him
Of all that has happened of late
To coins of the Indian realm,
That makes me despair of my mate;
The nominal roll of my wages
Being only a farce and a sham,
That riles me and often enrages,
To see the sad slave that I am.

3.

I'm toiling and moiling and moaning
In this over-scorching red heat;
And yet I am always postponing
The day when we promised to meet;
My purse being so empty that duty
Denied me, as well it behoved,
To take in the bloom of her beauty
The only girl ever I loved.

4.

Oh! ever I loved, or shall ever
Illumine this heart into glow,
Though other fair maids may be clever,
To me they are nothing, I know;
Without her the wide world is dreary,
As dreary as dreary can be,
But, oh, with my arms round my dearie,
How happy and cheery were we!

5.

If true about love in a cottage,
And all that the poets may sing
Of breakfast on porridge and pottage,
And supper on not anything,
And true that both Venus and Cupid
Delight in such bowers to dwell,
Then, certes, I'm senseless and stupid,
In not sending sure for my belle.

6.

But hot is a cottage in summer
Beneath the sun's Indian rays,
And surely would kill a new-comer,
All fresh from the banks and the braes;
Whereas, on the eve of our marriage,
I hoped to have something more gay,
By way of a horse and a carriage,
The Government swindled my pay!!

7.

They've got me on toast and gridiron,
Too ready to fleece me and flay,
Like eels of which famous Lord Byron
Once wrote in his wonderful lay;
And now they have fleeced me so often,
And I am so desperate grown,
That nothing can soothe me nor soften,
Till once I can call you my own.

8.

My own—my own darling and dearest,
The queen of my home and my heart,
Whom fortune the direst and serest
Can never more sunder or part!
And so though it's hard to be waiting,
Let honour, my love, be our plea,
For soon may the clouds be abating,
Till then let us wait—wait a wee!

LXI.

Then he bent his steps away,
Where he went I cannot say,
But the tenor of his lay
Made me sore ;
And reminded me when I
Was in love and very shy,
In the good old days gone by
Evermore.

LXII.

And I saw what was to be
Seen in this great counteree,
From the mountain to the sea,
Far and nigh ;
But I cannot now explain
All about it here again,
And 'twould only be in vain
I should try.

LXIII.

For the land is far and wide,
And as much diversified
In the peoples that abide
Here and there,
As the features of the ground
With varieties abound
Greater than can else be found
Anywhere.

LXIV.

On the swampy, hot *terai*,
Where so many pine and die,
I was laid with ague nigh
Unto death;
Till the racking of my bones
Might have moved the very stones,
By the mutterings and groans
Of my breath.

LXV.

From the mountain's lofty brow
I beheld eternal snow,
As the glaciers in glow
Shone so bright;
And they loomed so very high
Up the cloudless, azure sky,
That they almost seemed quite nigh
To my sight.

LXVI.

As you scarcely need be told,
It was very, very cold,
Thus to tread the trackless wold,
Deep in snow;
But I felt no great alarm
Through suspense of coming harm
While I felt my blood run warm
In its flow,

LXVII.

Up the Himalayan heights,
With their ever-varied sights,
And their shifting shades and lights,
Did I go;
Till my giddy head went round,
On the beetling cliffs that frowned,
When I looked upon the ground
Down below.

LXVIII.

Oh, how pure the mountain air
To be found abounding there!
But so very light and rare
Therewithal,
That my pulse beat wild with speed,
And my nose began to bleed,
While I couldn't hear a screed
Or a squall.

LXIX.

I could neither walk nor run,
In the shade or in the sun,
Without feeling almost done
Down to rest;
For my heart went rub-a-dub,
As if old Beelzébub
Drove it with a polo club
To my breast.

LXX.

In remote Afghanistan
I got very pale and wan
With the boils that ne'er a man
Can endure;
And became a wretched worm,
Though I tried iodiform,
And all sorts of sperm and corm,
For their cure.

LXXI.

I remember with regret,
Nor for ever can forget,
How I used to fume and fret
Life away;
For their sores have left their dregs,
And their marks upon my legs,
Glazing white and round as eggs
To this day.

LXXII.

Through the pathless Zembar Pass
I went wrong like Balaam's ass,
Having lost my guide, alas!
And my way;
And to reach the steppes below,
Scarcely knowing where to go
There I wandered to and fro,
Quite astray.

LXXIII.

For my guide slunk off behind,
And levanted like his kind,
Leaving me, in truth, to find
My own way;
Being so very sore afraid,
And quite utterly dismayed,
That the Murrees had waylaid
Us to slay.

LXXIV.

It was not a pleasant thought
To reflect, as well I ought,
That my folly might be bought
With my life;
Which would sure enough be true,
If the Ghazies only knew
How defenceless I was to
Stand their strife.

LXXV.

Oh! the winds they pierced my bones
With their freezing, howling groans,
As I trudged across the stones,
Up the heights;
And how glad was I again,
After such a toilsome strain,
When the camp upon the plain
Hove in sight!

LXXVI.

With the Sisters of Thibet
I have often after met;
And, oh, what a frouzy set
They appeared!
For their wizened face and skin,
And their scraggy, bearded chin,
Made them look so truly thin,
Worn and weird.

LXXVII.

Ugh! I shuddered in disgust,
For I like a buxom bust,
Even though it be but dust
That must die;
And I turned my face away
From the sight of their array,
To reflect upon a day
Long gone by;

LXXVIII.

When I took my bonnie bride
In her beauty to my side,
On the day of proudest pride
Of my life;
When my Mary Anne was young,
And the dew and honey hung
From the rosy lips and tongue
Of my wife.

LXXIX.

Old Koot Hoomie was a knave,
And the whole of the conclave
But a mixture of the slave
And the rogue;
While the way the Adepts played
With the Sisters in the shade
Made them look like Satan's paid
Synagogue.

LXXX.

Ibex, cheetel, and markore
There I shot in plenty store,
Till the sport was fit no more
To amuse;
And in valleys of Cashmere
I could shoot a herd of deer
Any season of the year
I might choose.

LXXXI.

As for tigers and for bears,
Why, I charmed them from their lairs,
Without using further snares
Than a "kill;"
Needing but to point my gun,
When I saw the grisly one,
And the grisly's race was run
With my skill.

LXXXII.

Oh! they snarled when they were hit
Which I candidly admit
Sometimes made me funk a bit
With affright;
When they opened wide their maws
And revealed their savage jaws
And their dreadful-looking claws
To my sight.

LXXXIII.

Pigsticking alone on foot
Was still wilder than to shoot,
As the fierce and fiery brute
Charged amain;
Till I caught him on my spear
When he rushed upon me near,
And so ended his career
On the plain.

LXXXIV.

This was out and out *shikar*,
As they call it there afar,
Being so much like real war
In its way;
Where you simply chanced your life
In the combat and the strife,
Against beasts so rude and rife
For the fray.

LXXXV.

Oh! but they were glorious days,
Not in one but many ways,
When I think of all the frays
I was at;
And of every narrow squeak,
Of which now I cannot speak,
I have had on mountain peak
And the flat.

CANTO THE FIFTH.

I.

As I voyaged on and on,
I repaired to fair Ceylon,
First Colombo, then anon
Point de Galle;
Where the myrrh and aloes grew,
Moistened with fresh, fragrant dew,
And where spicy breezes blew
Over all.

II.

Here an elephant I shot,
Of proportions which, I wot,
If I wrote them, you would not
Fail to doubt
What a tusker huge he was,
And the weight of both his jaws,
That surpassed all Nature's laws
Out and out.

III.

First he squirted from his trunk
All the water he had drunk,
Shortly after, he had sunk
On the ground;
Then the roaring that he made
Made me very sore afraid,
Till I got him lowly laid
Safe and sound.

IV.

Judging from his skeleton,
All of us declared, *nem con*,
That it was a mastodon
Of the place;
So that my last powder-blast
Cut the present from the past,
Having killed the very last
Of his race.

V.

Then of course I went to see
All the coffee plants and tea,
And at last Trincomalee
Went to view;
Then I took my sail and oar
From this spicy island shore,
And so waved to it one more
Fond adieu.

VI.

We are changing now our clime,
And this therefore is the time
Suited best to change the rhyme
Of my song;
As we plough the Southern Sea,
With slack sheet and stunsails free,
And the ship full merrily
Bowls along.

VII.

But the steed, in changing feet
At the gallop, makes a fleet
Jostle of the jockey's seat
On his back;
So, to change the feet of song,
Be they short or be they long,
May be either right or wrong
Of the hack.

VIII.

Nathless, to this stanz' and stave,
Which have served us like a slave,
We shall now upon the wave
Wave adieu;
And adopt another here,
As we change our hemisphere,
Which I fondly hope will cheer
Us anew.

IX.

For the hack is fit and sound,
Sound as when he took the ground,
Only fond of prancing round,
Just for fun;
But without a crack or hump
From his shoulders to his rump,
Now then, Rosinante, *Jump!*
And it's done.

X.

"Mister Mucklemouth!" I heard
Captain Cates sing out in tune,
"You will soon have your reward,
For this eve or afternoon
You will sail upon the brine
Right across earth's central line.

XI.

The EQUATOR at long last!
There it was some leagues ahead,
And I felt my pulse beat fast,
As the monster vessel sped
On her way to cross the chain
That bisects the sounding main.

XII.

"Now," he cried, "we're passing now;
Mind your eye and hold your grip."
And I saw her foaming prow
Rising, as the gallant ship
Bounded like a startled deer
Of THE LINE full fathoms clear.

XIII.

So, indeed, it seemed to me,
But some others spoke and said
It was some confounded bee
That had entered in my head;
And, moreover, they could swear
Ne'er a chain existed there.

XIV.

Then arose a great dispute,
Some for them and some for us,
Such as that of famed repute
On the Areopagus;
Which, to prove what it was worth,
Soon constrained me to hold forth :—

XV.

"Silence, gentlemen," I said;
"Lend to me your Midas ears;"
And I waved my hand and head
To keep down their rising cheers;
Then, like Paul upon Mars Hill,
Thus I spoke with right good will :—

XVI.

"Friends and mariners, I know
Not why such a doubt should rise,
But to see you wrangle so
Makes me think our course were wise
Once to settle out and out
This moot point beyond a doubt.

XVII.

"*A priori*, it seems strange,
If there's nothing in it all,
Why should everything change,
As if we had leapt a wall,
Or done something" (cheers) "which I
Deem has changed our very sky.

XVIII.

"Gaze around you" (loud applause);
"Where is Heaven's wonted host?
Wherefore hidden, but because
We have tumbled sure and tossed
Through what hides them from our view,
While some others rise anew?

XIX.

"Where is now the North Pole star?
Where, oh where our friend the Plough?
Where?" (sensation) "sunk afar,
And the Northern Streamers now
Hold their revelry and dance
Where no more they meet our glance.

XX.

"Nor suspect that this is all
I could argue in this case,
To convince both great and small
That now stand before my face;
Summer's winter, autumn's spring,
All is changed and everything.

XXI.

"E'en the Old Man in the Moon"
(Cries of 'Hear, hear!' and 'Sit down!')
"May this night and afternoon
Be seen tumbled upside down,
And appear, alive or dead,
To be standing on his head.

XXII.

"And his faithful Collie Dog—
I love collies" (cries of 'Oh!'),
"Which he never used to flog"
(Cries repeated, 'Oh no, no!'),
"Has turned up his collie paws
Right 'gainst gravitation's laws."

XXIII.

Then arose a Blizzard bold,
Who had roamed the stormy sea,
And in tones sonorous told:—
"This is all tomfoolery!
Chain in very truth is none
Round the earth, or moon, or sun.

XXIV.

"It is only understood"
(Cries, disturbance, and a laugh),
"To compute the latitude
North and south by half and half;
And must only be supposed,
But not handled or exposed."

XXV.

"Understood or undersat,"
Cried I, having just sat down,
"He were much of folly fraught
That its presence would disown;
So I think" (loud cheers) "and judge
Without evil thought or grudge.

XXVI.

"'Understood' is very good,
So is also to 'suppose,'
But can ne'er provide with food
A poor beggar with cold toes;
It is meat, sir, meat and drink
That can save him from death's brink.'

XXVII.

So I ended, and the crowd
Shouted till they rent the air,
And I felt a wee bit proud
I had spoke so sound and fair,
As to move my hearers to
Such a loud hullabaloo.

XXVIII.

Growing bolder, "Come," said I,
"I would wager quite a pot,
That if I had means to try,
I would prove it on the spot,
That the chain is lying there,
Even so as I declare."

XXIX.

"Bet your bets and we shall see,"
Said the wily Captain Cates,
And his eyes were full of glee,
As were those of all his mates;
Just to get some harmless fun,
Of which lately we had none.

XXX.

So the bets were bet and made
In a round and goodly sum,
To be duly cashed and paid
When our ship to port would come;
For we both were millionaires,
And as mad as mad March hares.

XXXI.

All the way from great New York
The bold Blizzard came, I trow,
Reckoned through this bit of work
I should never live to go;
And he *guessed* in his harangue
With delicious nasal twang.

XXXII.

Blizzard gave a hollow laugh
As we put the ship about,
And was much inclined to chaff,
Hoping this would put me out;
But he really little knew
With what stuff he had to do.

XXXIII.

So we steered in spirits gay
Fit to make one's heart rejoice,
Till the noontide time of day,
When I heard the captain's voice
Shouting, "Stop her!" and she stopped
Near where I was to be dropped

XXXIV.

Sextants now were taken out,
Logarithm books displayed,
And the vessel searched about,
To make certain to a shade
Where the line, if there was one,
Could be found beneath the sun.

XXXV.

How they gazed, that learnèd crew!
Though some said that all the while
They were laughing at us two,
With a kind good-natured smile,
Which I always like to see,
Be the cause whate'er may be.

XXXVI.

Then a youngster on tiptoe
To the captain bawled aloud:
"Twelve o'clock, sir." "Make it so,"
Then replied the captain proud;
And I wondered with what skill
They could change the hour at will.

XXXVII.

"Change the hour!" cried Captain Cates,
Full of merriment and fun.
"Why, man, me and all my mates,
We can change the very sun;
If you look through this with me
You shall see what you shall see."

XXXVIII.

Next, the sextant in my hand
He deposited with care,
And then taught me how to stand
And to handle it and stare,
Till, upon my honour bright,
I could scarce believe my sight.

XXXIX.

Though the sun was overhead,
Pouring down his scorching rays,
This small instrument, instead,
Made him droop to meet my gaze
From the lofty zenith high,
To where kiss the sea and sky.

XL.

"Wah!" I blurted, and no more
Could I say in my surprise.
'Tis a word that I abhor,
I picked up 'neath sunny skies,
Where the "Wah" supplies the place
Of everything in every case.

XLI.

Then I heard "Eureka ! I,
I have found the very spot,"
And the same exulting cry
Burst anon from all the lot:
"Now then, Mister Mucklemouth,
This is neither north nor south.

XLII.

"If the chain of which you talk
Hath existence anywhere,
Sure enough, as chalk is chalk,
You will find it down, down there,"
Pointing to the deep profound,
Which, perchance, no sound could sound.

XLIII.

It was fun for them, but far,
Far from fun it was for me,
To lose sight of sun and star
Fathoms deep beneath the sea;
But my honour had been pledged,
So I neither flinched nor hedged.

XLIV.

Before plunging in the deep,
From which I might rise no more,
It all struck me of a heap
What I ought to do before;
And I took my ink and pen,
And down scribbled there and then:—

THE RULING PASSION.

1.

Dearest, though the swelling sea
May soon close on me for ever,
Though the Fates may all decree
That we meet again, oh, never!
Still this heart was ever thine—
Thine, my love, in pain and pleasure,
Even so as thine was mine,
My first rare and fairest treasure.

2.

Blame not now the rashness wild
That has brought me to this trouble,
And remember, darling child,
Flesh is grass and life a bubble.
Love alone should live for aye,
In this world of wail and sorrow,
Changing not with Time's decay,
Aye the same—today—tomorrow.

3.

While I draw my latest breath,
And my soul from flesh is riven,
With affection strong as death
Do I pray to be forgiven,
Oh! for every word unkind
My rude lips have ever spoken,
That could wound thy gentle mind,
Of chaste love the sign and token.

4.

Cheerfully would I submit
To all sorts of pain and penance,
So that, if the Fates permit,
I might still retain the tenance
Of your heart without a guile,
Evermore to love and cherish,
And your dear, devoted smile
To enjoy—or coldly perish.

5.

Let me kiss that lock of hair
Ere I plunge below the billow,
It was once a maiden's fair,
Resting on a stainless pillow,
And must surely nerve my hand
In this task, and make it steady.
Heigho! comrades, here I stand
At your service, hale and ready.

XLV.

Then I donned a coat of mail,
Loaded with a lot of lead,
So to sink I mightn't fail,
And a helmet on my head,
Of the latest patent style,
Through which I might breath the while.

XLVI.

Thus equipped, I sought the brine,
With a hawser and a hook,
After practising the sign
How to signal like a book,
And so let my comrades know
What was doing down below.

XLVII.

The wild waters curled around,
Just as in my former dream,
But if I were to be drowned,
I determined not to scream,
Or show any sign of fear,
Even if my death drew near.

XLVIII.

Down and further down I went
In the liquid, limpid sea,
Till the circumambient
Pressure seemed too much for me;
But I strove to overcome
My distress, though almost numb.

XLIX.

I was heavy at the start,
But soon light and lighter grew,
As the pressure on each part
Deepened as I deeper drew;
Till at last I reached a zone
Whose mean weight was just my own.

L.

Like Mahomed's famous bier,
Hanging between heav'n and earth,
So was I suspended here
In a somewhat awkward berth,
Being nor either up nor down,
With great odds that I should drown.

LI.

From my reservoir of breath
Then I puffed and puffed away,
That, for either life or death,
I might touch the bottom clay,
Which I did, and looked around
To observe what there was found.

LII.

What a distance I could see
Far throughout the lucid deep!
And the wealth beyond degree
It contained within its keep!
Gem on gem and prize on prize
Were strewn there before my eyes!

LIII.

I could see the sunken wrecks
That had foundered in the gale,
With their timbers, ropes and decks
Slowly crumbling, wood and nail,
While the barnacles held fast
To each mouldering spar and mast.

LIV.

Seaweeds grew upon the planks
On which sailors trod before,
For the chains had lost their clanks
To the sea-song's sounding roar;
While the capstans stood so still,
And the crews were cold and chill.

LV.

Where were they who strove so well
In their struggles vain for life?
Look around you! there they dwell
At the end of all the strife;
For there lie their whitened bones
'Mong the deep sea rocks and stones.

LVI.

There the valiant are at rest,
In the fathoms down below,
Heedless how the swelling breast
Of the wave heaves to and fro;
For the deeper depths are far
Too profound with winds to war.

LVII.

Whose the bones that moulder here?
None can tell, for none can know,
Till the trumpet loud and clear
Wakes them up to weal or woe,
On that great and solemn day,
When the sea must yield its prey.

LVIII.

God! it was a woeful sight
Down among the dead to be,
Feeling scared, as if they might
Rise again and talk to me,
And what else the fancy breeds
Of the dead's unearthly deeds.

LIX.

There the wealth for which they strove
Lay unheeded down the deep,
For the richest treasure-trove
Now no more could rouse their sleep,
And their sleep was too profound
To be waked by sight or sound.

LX.

Little recked they now, alas!
Of the ocean's boundless store,
Or what time might bring to pass
On the land or sea or shore;
Since their mortal race was run,
And their deeds and days were done.

LXI.

I could see the ocean caves
Where the mermaids softly sing
Their sad dirges round the graves
Where the brave lie slumbering;
While their flowing, raven hair
Clustered round their shoulders bare.

LXII.

And they sang a simple song,
A soft, soothing lullaby,
Which the viewless echoes long,
Long prolonged across the sea,
With sweet symphony of sound,
That was pleasing beyond bound.

LXIII.

In a mellow, melting strain
Which might move the stones to weep,
Thus they sang their sad refrain
Over those who lowly sleep
Far beneath the breakers' roar,
And the waves that lave the shore:—

THE DIRGE OF THE MERMAIDS.

I.

'Tis not for the gems of the ocean
Nor yet for the gold in its keep,
We sing—but to pay our devotion
To those who repose in the deep;
To soften the slumber, though cheerless,
And smooth down the pillow, though bierless,
Of high-hearted bosoms and fearless,
Who sleep out their weary long sleep.

2.

For here sank the young in their beauty
More often than wrinkled old age,
Determined to stand to their duty
Against the imperious rage
Of tempests that tore down and tattered
The splintering timbers that scattered,
And surges that shivered and shattered
With fury which naught could assuage.

3.

We murmur our song in soft numbers,
So not to disturb them or wake,
But gently to sweeten their slumbers,
Till heaven's foundation shall shake;
When sea shall surrender her sleepers,
And tears shall be wiped from the weepers,
And they who are weary watch keepers
Shall watching and weeping forsake.

4.

Nor cypress nor green weeping willow,
Meet emblems of death and of woe,
Can grow round their lowly laid pillow,
Beneath the green billows below;
No sister can weep by her brother,
Nor friend at the grave of another,
Nor over her child can the mother
Her tide of pent passions bestow.

5.

They sleep from the toil and the sorrow
Wherewith the wide world is so rife,
Today even so as tomorrow,
Both strangers to labour and strife ;
Till sounds the Last Trumpet, and mourners
And mourned shall rejoin from all corners,
And all the earth's countless sojourners
Shall rise forth from death unto life.

6.

We sprinkle nor roses nor garlands
To rest on their watery grave,
For they grow away in afar lands,
And not in the womb of the wave ;
But sea-shells in plenty we spread on
Their tomb which no footstep shall tread on,
And pearls of great beauty we shed on
The shrouds that encompass the brave.

LXIV.

Hush ! the voices ceased to wail,
And the faëry forms that sang
Vanished like the summer gale,
While their dying chorus rang
In my ears with soothing strain,
Which I ne'er can hear again.

LXV.

Vanished also in a breath
Was the whole enchanting scene,
And all marks and signs of death
Seemed as if they ne'er had been
While beside me, on the ground,
Think ye what on earth I found?

LXVI.

'Twas a cable stout and great,
Covered with sea-lichen green,
Trending out its fathoms straight
The rude rocks and rifts between
And so great was my surprise
I could scarce believe my eyes.

LXVII.

Was this also but a shade
That would vanish from my touch?
And in truth I felt afraid
E'en to handle it or touch,
With that creepy kind of feel
At the sight of things unreal.

LXVIII.

I beheld it with some awe
As a quite uncanny thing,
From which I would fain withdraw,
Fast as I could ply my wing;
But again self-pride down bore
My compunctions on this score.

LXIX.

I approached it inch by inch,
Creeping on my hands and knees,
Being determined not to flinch,
Although far from being at ease,
Stopping, watching by the way,
Like a thief in search of prey.

LXX.

Here it was; but, sure enough,
What it was I scarce could know,
Covered as it was with slough,
And with slime as thick as dough;
Which I had to scratch and scrape,
With my mouth with fear agape.

LXXI.

At the first suspicious rub,
Ugh! my spirits oozed away
But I still resolved to scrub
In a mood of blank dismay,
Till my labour found reward,
When I reached the kernel hard.

LXXII.

Then it was, indeed, my turn
To cry out "Eureka!" loud,
And I felt my bosom burn
With resentment to the crowd
Who had thought me raving mad
To maintain so strange a fad.

LXXIII.

In an ecstasy of joy,
High above my normal rule,
I felt somewhat like a boy
Gaily bounding out of school;
So delighted beyond bound
Did I feel for what I found.

LXXIV.

Then I signalled them: "More rope!"
And my tether they enlarged,
Till its very furthest scope
To my credit had been charged,
And they couldn't count out more,
Having none to count in store.

LXXV.

As Saint George the Dragon rode,
Once upon a former time,
In such fashion, so I strode,
Like a clown in pantomime,
Right across the deep-sea line
I had found beneath the brine.

LXXVI.

And I firmly fixed my hook
To this wonder of the sea,
So that nor by hook nor crook
Would it any more get free;
Then I clutched it like grim death,
Though with fear and bated breath.

LXXVII.

"Heave!" I signalled, and they heaved,
But with far too sudden grab,
Which they saw, and soon believed
That I must have caught a crab,
Or done something very strange,
Out of Science' track and range.

LXXVIII.

"Gently does it," I made sign,
Fearing lest the rope would yield,
For, if so, the Tropic brine
Once for aye my fate had sealed,
And the mermaids once again
Might resume their melting strain.

LXXIX.

Then they heaved and hauled away,
With a merry sailors' song,
And 'twas "Kate," I heard them say,
They were praising all along,
Which sweet song of jocund roar
I have quoted once before.

LXXX.

Then they improvised a strain
Of the heave-and-hauling style,
Which they sang with that refrain
With which sailor-lads beguile
Toils and trials of all kinds,
On the tossing waves and winds:—

THE SALT, SALT BRINE.

1.

We will pull him up from the salt, salt brine,
Where the billows roll and the corals spring,
Where glistening pearl-drops brightly shine,
And the merry mermaids sweetly sing.

2.

The waves are deep in the ocean's bed,
Where the billows roll and the corals spring,
But we will haul him, alive or dead,
Where the merry mermaids sweetly sing.

3.

Together, my boys, for the rope is tough
Where the billows roll and the corals spring,
We will tug and strain till he cries enough,
Where the merry mermaids sweetly sing.

4.

How mad was the freak to which he gave heed!
Where the billows roll and the corals spring,
But madmen are hard by the nose to lead,
Where the merry mermaids sweetly sing.

5.

Let us haul him up from the deep sea wave,
Where the billows roll and the corals spring,
Where rest from labour the young and brave,
Where the merry mermaids sweetly sing.

6.

He went down quite heavy enough, he said,
Where the billows roll and the corals spring,
But he is now heavier than sacks of lead,
Where the merry mermaids sweetly sing.

7.

Then for your sweethearts all, haul, boys, haul,
Where the billows roll and the corals spring,
For the sake of your wives and bairnies small,
Where the merry mermaids sweetly sing.

8.

GRAND CHORUS:—

We will pull him up from the salt, salt brine,
Where the billows roll and the corals spring,
Where glistening pearl-drops brightly shine,
And the merry mermaids sweetly sing.

LXXXI.

Harder still and harder grew
The sharp strain upon the rope,
Till at last the vessel's crew
Gave up almost every hope
They would see me more alive
From my reckless, madcap dive

LXXXII.

Then the hawser, strand by strand,
Ply by ply, began to break;
Oh, great God! to be on land,
Or on board the goodship's deck;
Anywhere but where I was
Firmly hooked in Death's cold claws.

LXXXIII.

Should the rope just now give way,
Down for ever I should go;
So I tried my best to pray
That my fate should not be so,
For sweet life seemed now more dear
When I saw that Death drew near.

LXXXIV.

Still the weight more weighty grew,
As the cable upward went;
Oh that I could now undo,
In my dire predicament,
That dread hitch that I had tied!
But I couldn't, though I tried.

LXXXV.

Fancy, reader of this tale,
How my inner vitals sank,
When I saw, without avail,
I was such a mountebank
As to doom myself to die
By this stupid, awkward tie.

LXXXVI.

" Avast heaving ! " I made sign,
As my only last resource ;
But the crew still drew the line,
And so quite ignored this course ;
And they heaved and hauled again,
Till their strength was spent in vain.

LXXXVII.

For the cable reached so far,
But no farther would it come,
Yet so near that, black as tar,
I could see the ship like some
Blotch upon the speckled sky,
When the clouds go sailing by.

LXXXVIII.

I commenced to think at last
That my rope must soon give way
And I mutely gazed aghast,
Fearing I was lost for aye ;
When, behold, I heard a whir-r-r
That sent all my soul astir.

LXXXIX.

'Twas the anchor dropping down
From the cathead of the ship,
Because Cates, lest I should drown,
Let his cable promptly slip,
With a hope forlorn to hook
Something on the anchor's fluke.

XC.

For the captain clearly saw
When I reached his cable's length;
So that now, if he could draw
With a chain of greater strength,
He might still, perhaps, succeed
In my hour of direst need.

XCI.

Very feeble though I was,
And my breathing oxygen
Fast exhausting without pause,
Yet did I my utmost then,
Once for ever to escape
Out of this most dreadful scrape.

XCII.

Who can tell my buoyant joy
To behold the anchor catch?
Then I signalled, "Ship, ahoy!
Haul away with all despatch;"
But when they commenced to haul,
They could haul it not at all.

XCIII.

Till at last they tied the chain
To the fire-and-iron horse,
Then they tried it once again,
And prevailed by sheer main force;
But before I reached the top,
All my senses seemed to stop.

XCIV.

When I opened first my eyes,
It was quite a woeful scene—
Women shrieking with wild cries,
Men aghast with silent mien,
All believing life had fled,
And that I was cold and dead.

XCV.

Thought not so the Doctor dear,
Who began with Death to cope,
And resolved to persevere
In his purpose with faint hope;
And at last, by thump and dose,
Saved me out of Death's grim throes.

XCVI.

First he hanged me by the legs,
Like an ox in butcher's stall,
To get rid of all the dregs
I had swallowed therewithal,
And so ease my swollen tongue
And congested heart and lung.

XCVII.

Then upon the level deck
Down he let me quickly glide,
And, oh! little did he reck,
As he rocked me side to side,
How he used me, smooth or rough,
So that it but proved enough.

XCVIII.

Lying now upon my nose,
Shortly after on my back,
Little rest and no repose
He accorded me, but whack!
Now and then, came in between,
Lest my death might intervene.

XCIX.

Times he planted down his knee
Firmly on my yielding breast,
And like blowing bellows he
Raised my arms and then down pressed,
To bring back the living breath,
That they thought had fled by death.

C.

The whole process he went through
To resuscitate the drowned,
I need hardly tell to you,
Reader, lest it might be found
That you couldn't understand
All the various plans he planned.

CI.

It was not by rote of book,
It was not without it, no,
But by something that partook
Part of book and part, I trow,
Of instinctive gifts of mind
That he treated frail mankind.

CII.

Till at last I bluntly stared,
As if in another world;
But, thank God, my life was spared
From the waves that round me curled,
And I saw that doctors' skill
Could e'en cure as well as kill.

CIII.

Oh! it was a narrow squeak
That I ran, as you may say,
And 'twas long ere I could speak
Of what happened on that day,
For my brain was in a whirl
Louder than a pibroch skirl.

CIV.

Mermaids sang again their songs,
Goblins pinched me with their claws,
And vast multitudes and throngs
Passed along without a pause;
While among the moving crowd
One fair matron wept aloud.

CV.

She was dressed in widow's weeds,
With a melancholy brow,
And her heart was such as bleeds
For some loved one, who was now
Buried in the cold, grey grave,
Or beneath the ocean's wave.

CVI.

Two young, helpless, orphan boys
Toddled by her side, I ween,
And they looked as if their joys
Were but few and far between;
For their mother's wail and woe
Alas! bowed them down so low.

CVII.

Well I knew that graceful form,
Though in mourning sable bent,
And that clearer than cairngorm
Forehead now so sorely rent;
'Twas none else than, oh! my own
That I saw thus grieve and groan.

CVIII.

She unwittingly came near,
Near where I had happed to be,
And distinctly I could hear
The careworn complaint which she
Poured along with melting tongue,
As she sang this wailful song:—

THE LOST HUSBAND.

I.

Came ye by Portsmouth or came ye by Plymouth?
Came ye by any Cinque Port on the sea?
Saw ye the whale or the raging Behemoth
Severed and sundered my good-man from me?

Mucklemouth, Mucklemouth, where is thy resting-place?
Where, and, oh, where is the scene of thy doom?
Farther than eagle's or albatross' nesting place,
Far would I wander to weep on thy tomb.

2.

Others have told the tale of disaster,
Wooed me and wanted me comfort to take,
Flattered and fawned; but no fawning can plaster
Hearts that are broken and pierced for thy sake.

Mucklemouth, Mucklemouth, where is thy resting-place?
Where, and, oh, where is the scene of thy doom?
Farther than eagle's or albatross' nesting place,
Far would I wander to weep on thy tomb.

3.

Gentle and calm, with the life of a lion,
Sweeter than honey and pure as the dew,
Just like an angel descended from Zion,
Loving and faithful and tender and true.

Mucklemouth, Mucklemouth, where is thy resting-place?
Where, and, oh, where is the scene of thy doom?
Farther than eagle's or albatross' nesting place,
Far would I wander to weep on thy tomb.

4.

Ask me not why I am weeping and weary,
Mourning for him who is absent from home,
Oh, my sad bosom is drooping and dreary,
Grieving for him who is lost on the foam!

Mucklemouth, Mucklemouth, where is thy resting-place?
Where, and, oh, where is the scene of thy doom?
Farther than eagle's or albatross' nesting place,
Far would I wander to weep on thy tomb.

5.

Never, no more shall the joy of his presence
Cheer me, alas! in the dusk of the day,
Turning from town with a bound and a pleasance,
Driving the clouds of my sorrows away.

Mucklemouth, Mucklemouth, where is thy resting-place?
Where, and, oh, where is the scene of thy doom?
Farther than eagle's or albatross' nesting place,
Far would I wander to weep on thy tomb.

6.

Sorrow is now my most constant companion,
Morning till midnight, and midnight till morn;
Neither can trumpet nor sound of the cannon
Rouse me from reveries sad and forlorn.

Mucklemouth, Mucklemouth, where is thy resting-place?
Where, and, oh, where is the scene of thy doom?
Farther than eagle's or albatross' nesting place,
Far would I wander to weep on thy tomb.

7.

Soon shall I follow thee, pining and dying;
Soon shall my dust be laid low in the grave;
I in the pitiless tomb to be lying,
Thou in the fathomless depth of the wave.

Came ye by Portsmouth or came ye by Plymouth?
Came ye by any Cinque Port on the Sea?

Saw ye the whale or the raging Behemoth
Severed and sundered my good-man from me?

Mucklemouth, Mucklemouth, where is thy resting place?
Where, and, oh, where is the scene of thy doom?
Farther than eagle's or albatross' nesting place,
Far would I wander to weep on thy tomb.

CIX.

Then I quickly turned me round,
My fond darling to embrace;
But, alas! I woke and found
She was not around the place,
But away in London Town,
And I nearly doomed to drown.

CX.

Yet the image of my wife,
Though despondent and in pain,
Brought me back again to life,
And revived me once again,
As she often did before,
In the good old days of yore.

CXI.

Morning came, and with the dawn
There was din enough on deck,
For the cable we had drawn
Now refused to yield or break,
But got fastened to the screw
In a fashion strange and new.

CXII.

Thus was fixed the *Royal Mail*
In mid-ocean hard and fast,
So that nothing could avail
To relieve her, till at last
We called up an engineer
To cut up this curious gear.

CXIII.

Say'st thou, reader, there is no
Superstition still extant?
Then that shows how much you know
Of what God did once implant,
Twisted, twirled and intertwined,
In the breast of all mankind.

CXIV.

Forward went the stalwart Scot,
With misgivings not a few,
Swore that he wad raither not
Hae sae muckle much to do
Wi' sic dour uncanny thing,
Lest his ruin it maun bring.

CXV.

Soon as he commenced to cut,
Vivid sparks began to fly;
"God," said he, "be wi' me, but
This is unco odd to spy;
There's the deil aboot it sure,
Sure's ma name is Dougall Dewr."

CXVI.

Still he persevered to knock
With his chisel of cold steel,
But anon received a shock
Which his sturdy frame might feel,
Deep through sinew, thew and thong,
Stout although he was and strong.

CXVII.

Quite ashamed to yield to fear,
To which he ascribed his lot,
He resolved to persevere
Through the labour he had got,
And though e'en the shocks grew worse,
He maintained his laboured course.

CXVIII.

Well-nigh severed was the wire,
Nigh exhausted was the Scot,
When, great God! it went on fire,
Broke, and slipped away like shot,
While the brawny Scotsman lay
Dead and cold as potter's clay.

CXIX.

'Twas a bonnie lad was lost,
Patriotic, stark and bold;
But all great achievements cost
Lots of lives and heaps of gold;
Since we prize the prize the more,
More it costs of gold or gore.

CXX.

Dougall in the deep we laid
With a sore and sorry heart;
Few could match him at his trade,
Or so ably act his part;
So when sinking down the surge,
We all sang the ancient dirge,
"*Cha till, cha till, cha till mi tuilleadh.*"

CXXI.

Much it puzzled now our brain
What on earth the cable meant,
And some rummaged, but in vain,
All their learnèd lore anent
Geography and suchlike g's,
Known to salts who sail the seas.

CXXII.

Some deep riddles might be solved
That were never solved before,
Such as why the earth revolved,
And unnumbered wherefores more,
From which spring the secret cause
Of the world's mysterious laws.

CXXIII.

Here might Isis be unveiled,
And the astral shades be shown,
Where all mortal men have failed,
Save the favoured number known
To make up the chosen set
On the steppes of far Thibet.

CXXIV.

We might all be "adepts" now,
Both in poetry and prose,
Fly about and dig and plough
In whatever spot we chose,
And our *rupa* leave at will,
By this key to magic skill.

CXXV.

"Square the circle at long last,"
Some one ventured to suggest,
Time and Space, the Present, Past,
Why not now be set at rest?
And all subtle themes display
To the glorious light of day.

CXXVI.

Would the chain yet join again
Was a point that none could know,
Or if some old Tubalcain
Had a smithy down below;
But in this we all agreed,
That 'twas passing strange indeed.

CXXVII.

One thing sure beyond a doubt
Was that it contained a spark,
Fit to slay one out and out,
And well worth of note and mark;
As it might turn out in time
To be something quite sublime.

CXXVIII.

Captain Cates upon the spot
Made an entry in his log:
"Latitude of bearings nought,
Longitude concealed with fog,
Came across a queer concern
That got fastened to our stern."

CXXIX.

So he wrote in pithy style
The events just now detailed,
But in handwriting so vile,
That most people would have failed
To make out the sense and gist
Of his very scrawling fist.

CXXX.

All great geniuses scrawl,
At least scrawlers think they do;
And if so, and scrawlers all
Are great geniuses too,
Then doth genius abound
Thick as leaves that strew the ground.

CXXXI.

I have studied this before,
And I now conclude and think
Talents often scrawl, but more
Often dulness splutters ink,
And that boobies often scrawl,
Or at times can't scrawl at all

CXXXII.

I say this in passing by,
For the captain sure was one
Who could write, if he would try,
As few landsmen could have done;
But 'tis hard to write at sea,
When the goodship plunges free.

CXXXIII.

We were on our way again
At the top of all our speed;
And, indeed, to speak the plain
Honest truth, we much had need,
Lest the Colonies might sue
For their mails being overdue.

CXXXIV.

There, however, lay the fact,
The EQUATOR had been shown,
Not by merely mental act,
But in very blood and bone,
So to speak, though no one knew
What great goodness might accrue.

CXXXV.

For the greatest science schemes
Seem but trifles at the time;
So it was when Watt's daydreams
Dwelt on steam, the theme sublime,
Watching teapots on the fire
Bubbling up in wrath and ire

CXXXVI.

Then it struck me in due time,
On recruiting back my health,
I should give a pantomime,
As a man of means and wealth,
And so spend the Blizzard bet
On a right down pirouette.

CXXXVII.

So I did, and very gay
Was the ship that brilliant night,
Which combined in fair array
Chivalry and beauty bright,
And we danced both waltz and reel
Till we couldn't raise a heel.

CXXXVIII.

Captain Cates, in duty bound,
Became Neptune on the spot;
And the Doctor, more profound,
Made Hippocrates his lot;
I was the Old Man of the Sea;
And bold Blizzard, who was he?

CXXXIX.

Who, of course, but Guzzle Goose,
Always making such a noise?
But with neither sense nor use,
Save alone for Christmas pies,
And the good old goose-quill pen,
Which was quite in fashion then.

CXL.

The gay ladies all were dressed
In smart costumes rich and fine—
Venus, Juno, and the rest,
Dian and Queen Proserpine;
While the fattest I could see
Dressed like fair Euridice.

CXLI.

Thus was spent, beyond a doubt,
A gay night upon the sea,
For the gorgeous revel-rout
Was as lively as could be,
And went off without a flaw,
Or one breach of moral law.

CXII.

Scarcely was the brilliant ball,
Pantomime, or what you will
Ended, than a swishing squall
Followed after our quadrille,
And the hearts that seemed so gay
Had some nausea next day.

CXLIII.

Through the roaring ocean now
We proceeded on our trip,
For the wind began to blow
On the quarter of our ship;
So we slipped before the gale
With slack sheet and ourspread sail,

CXLIV.

Oh! we pitched and rocked about
Till the sails commenced to flap,
Which we well could do without,
But I never cared a rap;
For when waves were raging high,
Was I seasick? No, not I.

CXLV.

All the conscientious qualms
Which I previously felt
Had quite vanished in the calms
And the doldrums of the belt
That surrounds the azure brine,
Certain leagues each side the Line.

CXLVI.

Do you ask me after that
Curious stoppage on the way,
If the mails reached Ballarat
And such places on the day
We were due? Of course they did;
That they shouldn't, God forbid.

CANTO THE SIXTH.

I.

WHEN we reached King George's Sound
There was plenty stir on board;
Some ones longed for solid ground,
Some to meet their spouse or lord;
While some others longed for change,
And the sight of something strange.

II.

What I did when I arrived
Needs no prophet sure to tell;
First to wire that I survived,
And that I was very well,
To that Phœnix of her kind
Whom I left so far behind.

III.

But behold my great dismay,
When they told me there and then
That upon a certain day,
Mentioning the epoch when
The sea-cable had gone wrong,
And remained so all along;

IV.

That, moreover, the last news
That it brought across the sea
Was to some one on a cruise,
Being, in fact, some news for me;
And the fragment small I read,
Which was plain enough, and said:

V.

"From his pining Mary Anne,
To her roving Mucklemouth;
Oh! if still alive, good man,
Pray abjure the sickly south,
And come back, or I'll expire,
For my heart with love's on fi——"

VI.

It was here the cable broke,
Ere the message reached the end,
Which was far from being a joke,
And so very hard to mend;
As they seemed to understand,
'Twas a thousand leagues from land.

VII.

Then there flashed upon my brain,
With a flash of lightning speed,
Thoughts replete with bitter pain,
And which he who runs may read;
And I dropped a tear for poor,
Dear, departed Dougall Dewr.

VIII.

Shortly after, we set sail,
Leaving land far out of sight,
As we pressed the *Royal Mail*
Through The Great Australian Bight,
Till we reached far Adelaide,
And proud Melbourne next we made.

IX.

When we reached the Melbourne Bluff,
Still some distance from the quay,
Some declared they had enough
Of the tumbling, tossing sea;
As for me, I loved the trip,
And every soul on board the ship.

X.

Even Blizzard bold and I
Had become quite steadfast friends,
Though we often chose to vie,
With all sorts of odds and ends,
The long, ling'ring hours to fill,
Which we did with best good will.

XI.

For our late contention was
Rather an attractive link,
And of divers tales the cause,
Which were hard to print in ink,
Or describe in proper phrase,
As they almost beggared praise.

XII.

Blizzard was a foil to me,
So was I to Blizzard bold;
I was plain, but handsome he,
Though perhaps a shade too old;
He could whistle, I could rhyme,
And so help to while the time.

XIII.

When and where I trotted out,
There was Blizzard by my side;
And when Blizzard roamed about,
I attendance danced with pride;
Thus we lived like comrades kind,
The best cronies you could find.

XIV.

Every place that we went through
I observed with lively care,
Jotting what was quaint and new
In my note-book then and there,
From the fair domains of Art
To where Nature played her part.

XV.

Being a creature of the town,
As I told you long ago,
One great weakness, which I own,
And which I could scarce forego,
Was to watch the mingled throng
As they briskly marched along.

XVI.

I reviewed them for a while
With a quite superior air,
And a Cockney kind of smile
Of contempt that wasn't fair;
Till at last, being overcome,
"Why!" cried I, "h-it's just like 'ome."

XVII.

Beauties with their dainty feet
Trod the pavements just the same,
Some with feet not near so neat
Ogling them—oh, fie, for shame!
But these things must always be
Where are maids so fair to see.

XVIII.

That I visited the great
Exhibition of that time
I must not forget to state
In my ever truthful rhyme,
Being so well worth the event
To observe which it was meant.

XIX.

The events of recent years
Were there plain before my eyes,
Not by what one reads or hears
From historians who tell lies,
Nor that book of Mr. Froude,
Which I thought so vain and loud.

XX.

Such amount of nonsense said,
And in such a bunkum style,
I have seldom heard or read
For a very long, long while,
For the tone of the whole book
Would give nausea to a rook.

XXI.

Ask the colonists what they
Themselves thought of your career,
Rushing through their land away
Like a raving charioteer,
And they'll only sneer and laugh
At your mawkish husk and chaff.

XXII.

Palaces took up the place
Of the wastes of days gone by,
And in harbour rode in grace
Argosies from far and nigh,
While the streets were all alive
With their swarming human hive.

XXIII.

What a fair and growing child,
Full of energy and life !
Though as yet a trifle wild,
Like young boys too fond of strife ;
But, to speak the honest truth,
Far from being at all uncouth.

XXIV.

All that Science, all that Art,
All that Industry could bring,
Were there set aside, apart;
But I missed the noblest thing—
For of poet's art was none,
Save one solitary one.

XXV.

I took up the little book
In my hands with gentle care,
Though its binding did not look
As if such a dainty fare
Of rich relish could be found
Between leaves so rudely bound.

XXVI.

"Oh!" I cried, "this is the man
Whom the Melbourne folk let starve,
Till he cut his mortal span
Which he could no longer carve,
Severing life's sacred band
By his own misguided hand."

XXVII.

They have built upon his grave
A neat tombstone, it is true,
But how better far to save
From a fate that all must rue,
And reward his gifts of mind,
That might well adorn mankind.

XXVIII.

To his tomb I duly went
To pay homage to his name,
When my heart I humbly bent
To reflect on earthly fame;
And I tried my voice to raise,
Thus to sing my hero's praise :—

GORDON.

THE AUSTRALIAN POET'S GRAVE.

(*The tribute of a Stranger.*)

1.

I come from far across the wave,
I've stemmed the wave across the sea,
Where billows boil and waters rave,
And gusty gales blow fair and free;
And now upon thy lowlaid grave
Lo! here's one laurel wreath from me.

2.

While standing by thy crumbling dust,
Late temple of poetic fire,
Meet time it were, I ween, and just,
With swelling strain to wake the lyre,
And sound thy praises, which, I trust,
Will linger long with son and sire.

3.

With inborn genius of mind
Which few were favoured to possess,
With manly courage frank and kind
Which ought to have secured success;
Yet doomed by fickle Fortune blind
To dark forebodings and distress.

4.

The fiery soul, that found a vent
In glowing thoughts and words of flame,
Though often sorely bowed and bent,
Was ever fearless and untame;
On flood or field, where'er he went,
His dauntless heart was aye the same.

5.

Ah me! how soon thy brief career
Was ended in this world of woe!
How soon, alas! thy lifeless bier
Was laid beneath the ground so low;
Where neither harp nor pipe can cheer,
Or kindle with their minstrel glow.

6.

No plaudits from admiring friends,
No blame can reach thy listless ear,
Nor garlands gay can make amends
For cold neglect when thou wert here;
Since sure with life life's passion ends,
Of hate and love, of hope and fear.

7.

With bays I fain would deck thy brow,
With blossoms never doomed to fade—
But ah! no olive leaf nor bough
Can ever more recall thy shade,
And none can tell us where art thou,
Or where thy viewless ghost has strayed.

A stranger and a passer-by,
Let me my humble tribute pay
Upon thy tomb, where lowly lie
The relics of thy mortal clay,
Wherein thy spirit, soaring high,
Once dwelt upon a byegone day.

9.

And let my mind in earnest muse
Upon thy sad untoward fate,
Which it were seemly to peruse
And ponder on my own last state,
When I can neither chance nor choose,
But enter through the viewless gate.

10.

I come from far across the wave,
I've stemmed the wave across the sea,
Where billows boil and waters rave,
And gusty gales blow fair and free,
And now upon thy lowlaid grave,
Lo, here's one laurel wreath from me.

XXIX.

I came back, absorbed in thought,
To my lodgings that sad eve,
For the grave that I had sought
Was enough to make me grieve,
And reflect on man's short life,
So replete with wail and strife.

XXX.

And what grieved me scarcely less,
When the hour of parting came,
Was a grief that one may guess,
And declare by word and name.
"And what was it," do you say?
The *Victoria* going away.

XXXI.

So it was. The noble ship
Was just sailing homeward bound;
As for me, my random trip
Was to rove the world around,
With the gales of Fate behind,
And before me Fortune blind.

XXXII.

Oh! it was a sorry scene
As I said good-bye to Cates,
Welcome friend as I had been
With himself and all his mates;
But the best of friends must part,
With however sad a heart,

XXXIII.

I took leave of Doctor Health,
As you well may understand,
For he saved me as by stealth
Out of death's unhealthy hand;
And I wished him every joy,
And success in his employ.

XXXIV.

"Should we ever meet again,"
I involuntarily thought,
And the thought gave rise to pain,
And a lump came up my throat.
"What a world it is!" cried I,
With a stifled sob and sigh.

XXXV.

There she was, the *Vixen Vic*,
As we called her on the way,
For a short and handy nick-
Name that wasn't hard to say;
There she was, but, oh! farewell,
How I felt I cannot tell.

XXXVI.

Three loud cheers, and thrilling waves
Of a thousand handkerchiefs,
And thenceforth the vessel braves
The rude rocks and shoals and reefs;
While with heart both sad and sore,
I went back again on shore.

XXXVII.

To describe where, after that,
Valiant Blizzard went and I,
Up and down to Ballarat,
Here and there, afar and nigh,
Would retard my simple song,
And prolong it far too long.

XXXVIII.

For the poem, I'm afraid,
May be longer than I wish,
But to save it from being staid
I'll evade all gibberish,
Noting only what is true,
And in manner strange and new.

XXXIX.

And, besides, it were discreet
That it should be rather long,
So to meet in season meet
The demands on such a song,
That goes round the whole wide world,
Calm benighted, tempest hurled.

XL.

To proceed. In Pluto's mines,
Where they dig corrupting gold,
And where sunshine never shines,
Down we went like heroes bold;
Till, on looking up the sky,
Lo, the day-stars shone on high.

XLI.

I felt very strange to be,
When the sun shone up so bright,
Down in darkness, and yet see
Those pale orbs with lambent light,
And to watch each distant star
Twinkling, twinkling from afar.

XLII.

Peuh! it was a boiling hot
Place to live in, to be sure;
And I pitied Pluto's lot
To such pits and pots endure,
Notwithstanding all his gold
And rich mines and gems untold.

XLIII.

"Take your Davy," some one said,
As we searched about the place,
And I thought the man misled
So to ask me to my face;
"Take my Davy!" I replied;
"No, I won't, although I died."

XLIV.

Then a snigger and a laugh
Burst from all those diggers rude;
But, though angry at their chaff,
It was not a bit of good;
Being myself such silly bloke
Not to have discerned the joke.

XLV.

"Oh, there's no great fear of death,"
Said the foreman or the squire,
"If the choke-damp spare your breath,
And the fire-damp don't take fire;
But our Davy we must take,
For our light and safety's sake."

XLVI.

It was afterwards I found
That the Davy was a lamp
Used by miners underground
To protect from fire fire-damp,
So that it would not explode
When we searched the golden lode.

XLVII.

It was christened by the name
Of Sir Davy long ago,
Who possessed such wondrous fame
For his safety-lamp, I trow,
To protect poor men in toil
When they groped beneath the soil.

XLVIII.

Ignorance of that and this
Kind of knowledge, good and bad,
Tended to disturb the bliss
I might otherwise have had;
But remember that a dunce
Cannot learn things all at once.

XLIX.

Then we rummaged to obtain,
But in vain, a lump of gold,
Till at last we found a vein,
Which we bled with daring bold;
But, instead of crimson gore,
Lo, behold the golden ore.

L.

Oh! it was a massive heap
That we found, and virgin pure,
Which would be accounted cheap
At ten thousand pounds, I'm sure;
And the men were thunder-struck
That we brought them such good luck.

LI.

So they called the glowing mass
The Dunce Nugget in their glee,
Which was not at all, alas!
A great compliment to me;
Yet I prided in the fame
That called nuggets by my name.

LII.

A small brand of virgin touch
They then gave me at the time,
And to Blizzard gave as much,
But, then, Blizzard couldn't rhyme,
Or make mention, save in prose,
Of such souvenirs as those.

LIII.

Pleased with our memento gift,
We returned to mount above,
Took our seat inside the lift,
Bubbling up with life and love;
For our hearts were full of glee
At such strange phlebotomy.

LIV.

It, indeed, was very strange,
Down at the Antipodes,
Where my pedestals for change
Seemed to hang from a trapeze,
With my dangling head below,
Though it looked *in statu quo.*

LV.

And how awkard to believe
That I walked, as I have said,
Just as lizards walk and cleave
To the ceiling overhead;
But that such a thing must be,
Take a globe, and you shall see.

LVI.

If you place a little fly
On Great Britain at the top,
And another, by-and-by,
On Australia, it will drop
On the ground, as you may see,
And so prove my Q. E. D.

LVII.

You must never trust to looks
Nor to luck, as I am told
They're deceptive—so are books
When their ins and outs are told;
But this oracle of mine
Beats all arguments divine.

LVIII.

If you only trust to looks,
Look into a looking-glass,
Where, as sure's your name is Snoqks,
You will find 'twill come to pass
That your pumpkin *vis-à-vis*
Right about seems turned to be.

LIX.

Why, man, in your lady's eyes,
Where you think you ought to shine
With true features and fair guise,
As I'd wish to shine in mine;
Yet you're truly upside down,
As all sages fair must own.

LX.

Oh! of all conundrums queer
Great Australia is replete,
But so hard to make them clear,
That I shrink from such a feat,
And will only write review
Upon quite a simple few.

LXI.

Although maidens fair remain
Just the same as maids at home,
Yet the beasts that roam the plain,
And the birds the air that roam,
Yea, the very forests change
In a manner weird and strange.

LXII.

Talk of Britain's stately oaks,
Pines, and chestnuts, well and good,
If you practise comic jokes,
Why, they're children in the wood,
And mean dwarfs that scarce one sees
To the great Australian trees.

LXIII.

"There were giants in those days,"
There are gaints still in these;
You will say so when you gaze
On these great Australian trees,
Towering like Babels high,
Up and further up the sky.

LXIV.

But you see no daisies here,
Modest flowers of fair renown;
Nor in Autumn's atmosphere
Can you meet with thistledown
Floating on the viewless car
That conveys it near and far.

LXV.

Not a single heather sprig
Ever clothes the lonely waste,
But the wattle's twisted twig,
Which was hardly to my taste,
Since I only love too well
The brown heath and heatherbell.

LXVI.

These fair emblems of our land,
And companions of our youth,
Deck not yet this distant strand,
Save where hands of love and truth
May have brought them to remind
Them of lands left far behind.

LXVII.

Oh ! the scenes were sad and weird,
Frowning in primeval gloom ;
E'en the ferns, like trees, appeared
Far above the ground to loom,
Mixed with tiny maidenhair,
Which to me was much more fair.

LXVIII.

There you see the tallest trees,
But with leaves all out of place,
As they shiver in the breeze,
Straight on edge and void of grace,
And without the slightest shade
From their far too upright blade.

LXIX.

There the strange marsupials
Lock their young ones in their pouch,
And, in spite of squeals and squalls,
Slope away with awkward slouch,
Then deposit down again
Their young burden on the plain.

LXX.

There the noiseless kangaroo
Hops about the grassy sward,
Not well knowing what to do
If you catch him off his guard,
Whether on all fours to walk,
Or on twos to stand and stalk.

LXXI.

There the cockatoo's wild freaks
Wake the welkin wide with fright,
And the laughing-jackass shrieks
Like an evil soul at night,
Sneering at life's husk and chaff
With a quaint, sarcastic laugh.

LXXII.

There the sun is upside down,
And the moon is just the same;
There our summer seasons frown,
While our winters there are tame;
And instead of the North Star,
The great Dog Star shines afar.

LXXIII.

There through mountain's rifted rocks
Whirling furies howl and hiss,
And the beetling defile mocks
Pandemonium's abyss;
While a livid, ghastly pall
Overwraps them one and all.

LXXIV.

There the beasts can scarcely walk,
There the birds can hardly fly,
There the leaves consist of stalk,
There the landscape looks so wry,
And surprises never lack,
For the very swans are black.

LXXV.

"*Rara avis*—the black swan!"
I involuntar'ly cried,
Being so much amused to scan
And to watch it grace the tide;
For, I thought, above the ground
Such a creature ne'er was found.

LXXVI.

But how little do we know!
When we once begin to think,
There are swans as white as snow,
And some others black as ink,
And the many thousand more
Odds and ends unknown before.

LXXVII.

But 'tis time that I should stop,
As I must have said enough,
Since too much were malaprop,
And might make your nature rough;
For a full, complete detail
Tends to make a story stale.

LXXVIII.

Think not this is mere romance
I am weaving from my brain;
No, but wisdom's utterance,
And the truth which I maintain
To have seen with open eyes,
Both with wonder and surprise.

LXXIX.

For my object is to show
A few glimpses now and then,
That your interest may grow
And go forward with my pen,
Picturing with 'prentice hand
Varied scenes on sea and land.

LXXX.

In reviewing all this maze
Of fantastic beast and fowl,
Think what met at last my gaze,
And with pleasure made me howl;
It was nothing less or more
Than grey rabbits by the score.

LXXXI.

"Come," quoth I, and brightened up,
"Here at last are some old friends."
But I drank a bitter cup
When they told me they were fiends
That, since they went there to roam,
Ruined many a hearth and home.

LXXXII.

There they were in myriads
Which no mortal man might count,
Though they tried all sorts of fads
To destroy the whole amount,
But whose pow'r was rather vague
To suppress this dreadful plague.

LXXXIII.

How they nibbled all the grass,
How they honeycombed the ground,
And what else they brought to pass
Of red ruin all around,
Have I not been often told
With dismay by young and old?

LXXXIV.

When I saw the little brutes
Swarming through each wood and field,
And destroying corn and fruits,
With what else the earth may yield,
I confess I deemed it hard,
E'en in spite of old regard.

LXXXV.

Weasel, ferret, and mongoose
Were brought over ocean's surge,
And in fields they let them loose,
So to end this vermin scourge;
But the rabbits and these same
Lived in peace, quite quiet and tame.

LXXXVI.

But at last the thing was done;
They could slay them at sweet will,
For a *savant* or big gun,
Who was blest with magic skill,
Had invented such a cure,
And the sage they named Pasteur.

LXXXVII.

So they tried it on a few
As you vaccinate an arm;
They went mad, and so went too,
Not a few, but quite a swarm
Both of rabbits, and as well
All the brutes in fields that dwell.

LXXXVIII.

Then they scratched and screeched and raved
In a very dreadful way,
Nor could even man be saved
From the ravage of their sway,
Being so much disposed to fight
By this rabies of dog's bite.

LXXXIX.

"Water, water everywhere;"
There was water sure enough,
But it only made them stare
E'en to think of such a stuff,
Though their thirst was raging high,
And their throats both parched and dry.

XC.

Oh! it was a great *huroosh*
And fell havoc which they made,
And required a stubborn push
Ere their ravages were stayed,
Which defied the firmest hand
To keep down throughout the land.

XCI.

The Jenolan Caves I saw,
With Old Clootie's coach-house too,
Where McKeown would own no law,
But robbed all that travelled through,
Till they found him out at last,
And then bound him hard and fast.

XCII.

Fancy here might roam at will,
Conjuring all sorts of sights,
Fashioned out with magic skill
From such stainless stalactites,
And learn lessons of past life
From the days of frail Lot's wife.

XCIII.

Buried deep beneath the ground,
Far from mortal's sight and ken,
Fairy cities there were found,
To the world unknown till then,
Fenced with Lilliputian walls
For defence from blows and brawls.

XCIV.

If you venture to go down
The rope ladder, do take care,
Lest you may be doomed to drown
In the stream that flows down there,
Dark and silent as the tomb
Or the shade of Hades' gloom.

XCV.

Oh for quill from angel's wing,
Wielded by a cherub's hand!
So that I might duly sing
Of the glories great and grand
Down in these mysterious caves,
That so look like giants' graves.

XCVI.

Tear-drops of a thousand years,
From the weeping rocks above,
Shed in these primeval biers
Mournful proofs of lasting love,
Which shall long endure and stand,
Sealed and signed by Time's right hand.

XCVII.

Both grotesque in form and mien,
On a ground full freely planned,
Mimic marvels may be seen,
Chiselled out by Nature's hand,
That provoke beholders' smile
From their quaintly comic style.

XCVIII.

Stalagmite and stalactite
Of assorted shape and size,
In a transport of delight,
Fascinated both my eyes,
As I gazed above, below,
To behold their glorious glow.

XCIX.

Sparkled in full brilliant blaze
Countless gems all flashing bright,
Which Apollo's shining rays
Never yet adorned with light,
But yet dazzling, all the same,
E'en with weak magnesium flame.

C.

Ask ye, gentle ladies fair,
How to frill and braid your skirts?
Go and choose your patterns there,
Fit alike for dames and flirts,
And observe the veils and shawls
That adorn these gorgeous walls.

CI.

Ask ye jewels for a crown,
To bedeck the proudest queen?
Come ye here, and look ye down
In this Casket proud of sheen,
Where they shine with such a blaze
As to beggar mere pens' praise.

CII.

I surveyed from One-Tree Hill
All that Brisbane could display,
Stretching forth her wings at will
Almost down to Moreton Bay;
And I wished the favoured town
Happy days and fair renown.

CIII.

The smooth stream meandered down
As a serpent trending through,
Peeping here above the ground,
There entirely lost to view,
As it wended down its way
Through green fields and gum-trees grey.

CIV.

'Twas a clear and cloudless eve,
When I viewed this pleasing sight,
And my breast began to heave,
As I breathed with pure delight
The cool gusts of mountain air,
Round a scene so fresh and fair.

CV.

From the mountains on one hand,
With their peaks so tall and thin,
To the distant seaside strand,
Where the shoals and sands begin,
There the panorama spread
On which eve her lustre spread.

CVI.

I looked round me with good will,
And with fondly friendly eyes,
From the top of Castle Hill,
By the bay where Townsville lies;
And from where I took my stand,
I devoutly blessed the land.

CVII.

Blessed it in its corn and oil,
Blessed it in its herds and flocks,
Blessed it in whate'er the soil
Yields from golden reefs and rocks,
And in sweet, abundant rain
To refresh the fruitful plain.

CVIII.

I enjoyed the rural life
With such pleasure, that I thought,
Had I only brought my wife,
I would almost sure have bought
A big farm, enough to keep
A few hundred thousand sheep.

CIX.

Riding after cattle wild,
Shooting bushrangers for sport
Are a pastime far from mild,
And the very finest sort
Of excitement one can find
Fit to please the Briton's mind.

CX.

But these scenes I can't describe,
Or at any rate I won't;
Nor by praise nor diatribe
Shall I trespass where I don't
Wish my feeble pen to dwell
On what Gordon wrote so well.

CXI.

But must shortly bid adieu,
After viewing Sydney Town,
Where I rambled through and through,
Just as usual up and down,
Being so struck with pure delight
By its grand, romantic site.

CXII.

Haven so surpassing grand,
Where I roved through cove and creek,
Quite enchanted with a strand
That was worth from far to seek,
And to view before I died,
As a bridegroom views his bride.

CXIII.

As a bridegroom views his bride !
That is, let us hope, with love,
Such as that which must abide
'Mong the angels up above,
And so certain to endure
Pale and passionless and pure !

CANTO THE SEVENTH.

I.

NEXT, New Zealand far away
Charmed me to its distant shore,
Where my footsteps I let stray,
And my wayward fancies soar
Up the mountain heights sublime,
Which I loved to roam and climb.

II.

From fair Auckland in the North,
To Dunedin in the South,
In due course proceeded forth
The same roving Mucklemouth,
Noting down with curious care
What was quaint and strange and rare.

III.

Up the steep volcano's brow,
Tarawera's sounding side,
Did I climb to reach the slough
Of its crater deep and wide;
And I looked far down its brink,
Which to Hades seemed to sink.

IV.

Scene of desolation's blight
Of all scenes that met my eye,
As from off the mountain height
I looked round me, far and nigh,
On a land so far forlorn,
As to make me grieve and mourn.

V.

Melancholy sat enthroned
Over all the lone domain,
And my inward spirit groaned
With a boding, sad refrain,
To behold the woeful pall
That completely clothed it all.

VI.

Where were now the White and Pink
Terraces so far renowned?
Doomed, alas! below to sink
Fathoms deep below the ground,
Being entombed in ashes grey,
Far from peep of dawn and day.

VII.

The volcano fumed its wrath
Over the devoted land,
And the angel dire of death
Sealed its fate with sateless hand,
Laying wholesale hamlets low
Underneath its scorching glow.

VIII.

Wakaréwaréwa's land
Caused my footsteps long delay
Where in awe I used to stand,
And regard the geysers play,
Spouting up their fountains high
Till they reached the azure sky.

IX.

With what play Sophia's Fount
Shone and sparkled in the sun!
And how hard to give account
Of the way the work was done!
Passing pow'r of pen as well
And the gift of tongue to tell.

X.

How the seething cistern rose,
Till it slowly flowed its bank,
Then commenced the mighty hose
To outpour its scorching tank,
In one upright, crystal stream
Beautiful beyond one's dream.

XI.

Standing on a chosen site,
'Twixt the sunshine and the spray,
I could see the rainbow bright
In its light and shade display,
Like a hallowed halo spread
Round about some saintly head.

XII.

Twenty minutes and no more,
Usually nor more nor less,
Would the pillar rise and roar,
And then slowly cease to press,
Till the fountain lost its strain,
And calmed down to rest again.

XIII.

Here's the hole wherein they used,
In the days which now are gone,
To have brains of captives bruised
And well pounded with a stone,
And then fried to meet their wish,
As a most delicious dish!!!

XIV.

I examined then the spas
Warranted for certain cure,
And quite wonderstruck I was
At their virtues to procure
Freedom from all aching bones,
That give rise to such deep groans.

XV.

Tikateri's swirling pool
Was too dreadful sure to see,
Being of burning brimstone full
As Gehenna's pool must be,
Where they say the wicked go,
To live on in endless woe!

XVI.

Vomiting its fiery wrath
In black bubbles up on high,
How the sight of such a bath
Makes one almost quake and cry
To be saved from such a doom
In the life beyond the tomb!

XVII.

"Lord," thought I, "I'll never swear,"
When I first observed this pit,
Fit to make the sinner stare
And grow pale to look at it;
Standing, one would almost think,
On dark Iffrinn's sable brink.

XVIII.

Be reminded, oh, my soul!
How my bones, I thought, would shake
At Wairaki's Steam Blow Hole,
And how, oh! the earth did quake
Under that terrific sound,
That so shook the trembling ground.

XIX.

And the geyser valley too
I remember long and well,
For a tale both fair and true
I could here detail and tell,
When in spirits bright and gay
There we strolled one glorious day.

XX.

Oh, fair lady! pray, take care,
For the quagmire quakes with heat,
Lest you tumble unaware,
And so bake your tender feet;
But what use is warning now?
There—you're knee-deep in the slough.

XXI.

Call the doctor—there he is,
Standing almost by your side,
Who will use what skill is his
To soothe down the gushing tide
Of distress and poignant pain
That succeeds in scalding's train.

XXII.

Pass me Tongariro's Mount,
In its surplice pure of snow,
As at random out of count
We proceed along and go,
While its summit smoked and fumed,
Yet was not at all consumed.

XXIII.

Through the famed Ottira Gorge
On we forged with spirits light,
Till at last I cried, "By George!
What a truly *gorge*ous sight!"
As there burst upon our view
Beetling bluffs and mountains blue.

XXIV.

Beetling bluffs and mountains blue!
But now robed in robes of white,
Of a pure and stainless hue
Where they rose before our sight,
In their mantle pure of snow,
Up above and down below.

XXV.

There, in distant southern clime,
Were the scenes that long I sought,
Rocks and mountain tops sublime,
Which the hand of Nature wrought,
And before which mere man stands
With meek mind and awe-clasped hands.

XXVI.

On the twenty-first of June
'Twas I passed this famous rift,
When the birds are out of tune,
And the clouds so seldom lift
From the breasts they love so well,
There to linger long and dwell.

XXVII.

"See it not in winter's gloom,"
Some one near I heard exclaim,
"But at Beltane, when the bloom
Of the *Rata* plumes the same,
And the mountain sides rejoice
With fair flow'rs and songsters' voice."

XXVIII.

Nay! the wintry mountain crest
Towers grander far to me,
Like the land of lands the best,
Distant far across the sea;
Even though the storm-sprites blow,
And the ground be clothed with snow.

XXIX.

For no Tropic bird am I,
Never was, and ne'er could be,
For I love the mountains high
By the wild and raging sea,
Since my bounding boyish blood
Flushed to view the mount and flood.

XXX.

Hold the reins, bold Jehu, hold!
For the path is far from wide,
And be wise as well as bold
Over this bold mountain side;
For, if once you lose the road,
We must all soon meet our God.

XXXI.

Woa, then, Paddy! don't you kick
At your traces in that style;
And you, Tinker, mustn't prick
And cock up your ears the while;
For the love of life and gold,
Hold the reins, bold Jehu, hold!

XXXII.

Glimpses through the rifted clouds
Here and there amazed us much,
As tall giants in pale shrouds
Rose on high the sky to touch,
While their bases seemed to sink
Even down to Iffrinn's brink.

XXXIII.

Now, as if by magic spell,
Lo, the clouds have passed away,
And, like echo's dying knell,
Died away the drifting spray,
And revealed the matchless mien
Of this proud, majestic scene.

XXXIV.

Here was Beauty's stately form
Seated on a throne of white,
Which the snowdrift and the storm
Left exposed before our sight,
While the sunbeam's shining rays
Lit the scene in brilliant blaze.

XXXV.

Scene of grandeur unsurpassed,
Wheresoe'er I chanced to roam!
In my mind that long will last,
Till I reach my long last home,
And old memories fade away
From my cold and lifeless clay.

XXXVI.

Hail, Dunedin! fondly hail!
Nestling there among the hills,
May your banners long prevail
Against carping cares and ills!
So that you may prove your fame
Worthy of your noble name.

XXXVII.

Then Ben Lomond (honoured name
Grafted from the Northern land)
Reared its peak, as well became
Such a name on such a strand,
As it watched, full wide-awake,
Wakatipu's soundless lake.

XXXVIII.

Waxed my spirit wild and warm,
When Glenorchy hove in view,
Being a name of magic charm
To the brave ill-fated crew,
Who took pride in land and name
More than riches, rank or fame.

XXXIX.

There it nestled, like its old
Namesake, between wold and hill,
While the breezes, fresh and cold,
Whistled round me, loud and shrill
Gathering tunes and martial lays
Of the brave old ancient days.

XL.

Deep and sombre were the lakes,
High and grand were all the hills,
And the snow, in feathery flakes,
Fell on frozen founts and rills;
While the whole wore such a mien
As my eyes have seldom seen.

XLI.

They might not be just the same
As the land left far behind,
But the glamour of their name
Woke up memories in my mind,
As if there the substance lay
Of the strand so far away.

XLII.

Here the Tui's bell-notes sweet
For the first time reached my ear,
When its gentle form so neat
For a moment would appear,
As it hopped from twig to twig,
With cocked tail and sable rig.

XLIII.

Then the skylark's notes of love
Sounded on this distant strand,
Just as if it söared above
From the old, frequented land,
Where I saw it rise and soar
Many a countless time before.

XLIV.

These are only but a few
Of the beauties of this land,
Which I went so far to view
From pure love for such a strand,
As for grandeur holds its own
'Gainst all lands that I have known.

XLV.

But the time to say good-bye
By-and-by was drawing near,
And I parted with a sigh
From a land I loved so dear,
Which called forth these simple staves
As it sank beneath the waves :—

FAREWELL TO NEW ZEALAND.

I.

Farewell to New Zealand, the land of my choice,
Of all the gay lands spread afar o'er the sea,
For here I have heard the gay lav'rock rejoice
The same as of old in the old country;
And also beheld it spring forth from the lawn
To sing its sweet notes as it soared up the sky,
As I've seen and heard it at break of the dawn,
In yon rugged land where the fawn loves to lie.

2.

Farewell to New Zealand, where mountains uprear
Their tall, dizzy pinnacles over the plain,
Where snow loves to linger along through the year,
To clothe their fair bosoms in robes without stain;
Where gorges sink down between bold beetling rocks,
And cataracts dash with impetuous roar,
Where nature is grand and majestic, and mocks
The winds and wild waves that may rave on its shore.

3.

Farewell to New Zealand, that fills one with awe
To watch the great wonders that work out their end,
The servants that faithfully serve the great law,
The nature of which we can ill comprehend;
The furious dragons, the fire of whose breath
Convulses the geysers to scale the blue sky,
And fume in their rage devastation and death
O'er all the ill-fated domain doomed to die.

4.

Farewell to New Zealand, farewell to a soil
So full of fair promise to rear up a race
Who yet will be famous for daring and toil,
And first in the field for demeanour and grace;
All loyally bound, by the magical band
Of Love, to a strand that is far from their own,
To kindle their fervour by sea and by land,
And nerve their right hand when the war-cry is blown.

5.

Farewell! for the snow-covered mountains recede,
And I am fast leaving the sight of the shore,
For lo! my good ship going fast at full speed,
And billows beginning to heave and to roar;
But yet though the voy'ge may be stormy and rough,
Once more in due praise I shall raise up my voice,
To bid Invercargill farewell, and the Bluff,
Farewell to New Zealand, the land of my choice!

XLVI.

In Van Diemen's land we strayed,
But my time and space, alas!
Were too short to be delayed,
And this, therefore, came to pass,
That I left its shore and clime,
To return some other time.

XLVII.

For Van Diemen's is a land
Of much promise years to come,
With, of course, extremely grand
Mountain landscapes, where are some
Cataracts that loudly pour
Their contents with dreadful roar.

XLVIII.

In a well appointed ship
We proceeded on our voy'ge,
Which, when sailing on her trip,
Might have carried e'en a Doge
In the good, old days when he
Took for spouse the deep blue sea.

XLIX.

New Caledonia we passed,
And remote New Hebrides,
As we steered the vessel fast
Past the sleepy southern seas.
But how different were these same
To th' orig'nals of that name!

L.

There, though mountain peaks appeared
With tall crests above the wave,
They were not the hills that reared
And gave shelter to the brave,
Who derived from them their blood
Long before old Noah's flood.

LI.

Neither moorland's heather bloom,
So far-famed in song and lore,
No, nor bracken brown nor broom,
Grew on yon far-distant shore,
Nor the thistle nor the pine
We adore for old lang syne.

LII.

There no raging surges beat
As on Caledon's loved shore,
But soft breezes, like the sweet
Perfume from ripe mandragore ;
Scarcely varying all the year,
And too tedious to be dear.

LIII.

Change is wholesome, people say,
But I won't say more on this,
Lest I might be led astray
Or be taken quite amiss,
There being things of which to tire
We should not till we expire.

LIV.

Such, for instance—oh ! on such
I must not herein dilate,
Sure that if I only touch
On such topics, I must prate,
Till my reason leaves in rhyme
On a subject so sublime.

LV.

Here, if I had gone ashore,
As I wanted much to do,
Could I hear the pibroch's roar ?
Could I see the bonnets blue ?
Could I hear the mountain tongue
Lisped by either old or young ?

LVI.

Pshaw! I'd only fall among
Wretched thieves in robbers' den,
And the greatest rogues unhung,
Shunned by all their fellow-men,
Being transported all their days
To these lonely creeks and bays.

LVII.

"Caledonians!" quoth I,
Mindful of the old romance,
"How the villains sure must lie,
When the scourings vile of France
Will presume to such a name,
So renowned for knightly fame!"

LVIII.

Through the countless sunny isles
That bedeck the Southern Sea,
Glittering in summer smiles,
On we kept to far Fiji,
Much admiring every strand
That so loomed like faëryland.

LIX.

Peaceful in its calm repose
The great ocean seemed to sleep,
So serene it seemed to doze
In a slumber quiet and deep,
As if all the winds that blow
Ne'er could mar its gentle brow.

LX.

Shimmered in the sheen of day
Merry sunbeams flashing bright,
And when they had lost their sway
Twinkling stars shone forth at night,
To behold themselves again
Mirrored in the ocean main.

LXI.

Sea and sky were so combined
As to charm and cheat the eye,
Dazzled, as it were, to find
Verdant islets up the sky,
Hung on high with magic wand
Like a fair, enchanted land.

LXII.

Here it was that first I saw,
With my eyes full wide awake,
That caprice of Nature's law,
Which was strange, and no mistake;
For the islands, green and brown,
Seemed suspended upside down.

LXIII.

If yon trees that looked so clear
Flourished with their tops below,
Then, dear me! it would appear
I myself might e'en be so;
Being suspended, as I said,
With my legs above my head.

LXIV.

And I often scratched my pow
To make sure that it was right,
But could not determine how
I could reconcile my sight
And my senses with what I
Saw revealed before my eye.

LXV.

True that in some other clime,
Gazing from the mountain's brow,
I had scenes seen as sublime
As the scenes I saw just now;
But, in all my pilgrimage,
This was far the best miraj.

LXVI.

For, of any sight or scene
I had seen, was none like this,
None so gentle, so serene
As these shores of joyful bliss;
Where the happy, dreamland isles
Were all bathed in radiant smiles.

LXVII.

'Twas the silent hour of night,
Not a breath disturbed the sea,
And the stars shone forth so bright
In their calm tranquillity,
When in absent-minded mood,
By the quarter-rail I stood.

LXVIII.

Ye who roam the lonely deep
May recall some midnight hour,
When all nature lay asleep
Save alone one wakeful Pow'r,
Who implored with pleading tone
From His high imperial throne.

LXIX.

Just beneath the Southern Cross
Such a night we ploughed the wave,
Without either pitch or toss,
All being silent as the grave ;
While I gazed in reverie
On the sky and blue lone sea.

LXX.

Crowded memories on my brain,
Crowded sad reflections too,
That were not devoid of pain,
When I thought of, oh, how few
Were the days and years of man,
And how short and vain his span !

LXXI.

Nothing could calm down to rest
The emotions of my mind,
While my agitated breast
Throbbed with bodings undefined,
So that sleep forsook my eyes,
Why—I couldn't e'en surmise.

LXXII.

Then I lighted a cigar,
Though forbidden there at night,
Let my fancies roam afar
To the lands far out of sight,
And I thought if evermore
I should see my native shore.

LXXIII.

A forlorn presentiment
Took possession of my soul,
And a wail, like a lament,
On my ears obscurely stole,
With such soft and sad refrain,
As to fill my heart with pain.

LXXIV.

Was it sirens' magic spell
Luring to their fateful strand?
Was it some great Inchcape Bell
Spoke of danger near at hand?
Was it mermaids' wailing throng
Sang again their plaintive song?

LXXV.

Fear, as a besetting sin,
I could disavow with scorn,
But this mood that I was in
Made me very truly mourn,
With an undefined regret
That were hard to interpret.

LXXVI.

All the goodship's company
Were by this time sound asleep,
Save the watch that I could see
Their night vigils quietly keep;
And whose drawling watchward roar
Made me feel the silence more.

LXXVII.

Only this, and only too—
Mournful as the "March in Saul"—
The dull throbbings of the screw
Broke the silence—that was all;
Save at times a gentle sigh
From the sleepers sleeping by.

LXXVIII.

There they were, the true and brave,
Resting calmly on the deck,
And of perils on the wave
Little did they care or reck;
But what dreams might pass their brain,
None can evermore explain.

LXXIX.

Then a puff of misty air
Passed, and they were clothed in white,
And I found my eyesight stare
In a swound or second-sight;
So be not surprised, my friend,
That my hair stood all on end.

LXXX.

A cold shiver through my bones
Made me tremble first with awe,
For the very lifeless stones
Might have quailed at what I saw,
Lying quietly at my feet,
Wound in their last winding sheet.

LXXXI.

I could see the cabins too,
Such was this queer gift of sight,
And the gentle fair ones who
Drew their breath so calm and light,
But with this too ghastly pall
Wrapped around them one and all.

LXXXII.

I stood motionless and mute
In a cataleptic fit,
Which so bound me hand and foot,
I could not turn round or sit,
So congealed was all my blood,
That refused its wonted flood.

LXXXIII.

As a waxen figure stands,
Even so stood I transfixed
To the spot, with both my hands
Stretched before me, and betwixt
My right fingers my cigar
Smoked and smouldered black as tar.

LXXXIV.

I stood there as still as stone,
Fairly petrified with awe,
Before this too truly shown
Tableau vivant that I saw;
Nor could I in any wise
Off the sight remove my eyes.

LXXXV.

Hard I tried my best to cry,
Harder still I tried to move,
But the harder did I try
Harder seemed the task to prove;
For my will, though still intact,
Failed to rouse one word or act.

LXXXVI.

Loud and louder grew the dirge,
And the light began to grow
Weird and weirder, till the surge
Soon assumed a ghastly glow,
Which our ship appeared to tread,
Like a spectre pale and dread.

LXXXVII.

Oh! the struggle which I made,
Yet I neither moved nor spoke,
For a weary weight was laid
On my breast, whose heavy yoke
Grew and grew, till, at its worst,
My poor heart was fit to burst.

LXXXVIII.

In this dire predicament
And deep trance in which I fell,
How much time I may have spent,
Sure, I cannot truly tell,
Save to mention on this page
That it seemed an endless age.

LXXXIX.

Then there came a fearful crash,
That awoke me from my trance,
And a great, terrific smash,
Passing pow'r of utterance,
Broke the silence all around
With its all too awful sound.

XC.

Oh ! that shriek of wild despair
That ascended up the sky ;
And the voices, whose last prayer
Sought the throne of God on high,
Are still ringing in my ears,
And shall ring for years and years.

XCI.

Fearful was the scene, and brief
Was that pang of poignant pain,
As the vessel passed the reef,
And then foundered on the main,
With an agonised farewell,
That mere words would fail to tell.

XCII.

One great heave, and then a lunge,
As if thrusting at some foe,
Then she took her long, last plunge,
And soon settled down below,
In a whirl that might ignore
Corrievrechan's sounding roar.

XCIII.

The wild waters pitched on high,
As if from a giant whale,
But above that roar their cry
Sounded, as their dying wail
Burst from out their prison graves
High above the roar of waves

XCIV.

In that whirlpool was I, too,
Sucked and swished and swirled about,
Till I knew not what to do,
And could neither speak nor shout,
Struggling in the seething foam
Of that fiery, fierce Maelström.

XCV.

In the boiling caldron down,
Down I went, but by good luck,
Being not destined yet to drown,
For the surface out I struck,
Which, by taxing all my strength,
I contrived to reach at length.

XCVI.

Few could I observe afloat
When the caldron ceased to swirl,
For the doomed and sunken boat
Sucked them down the foaming whirl,
So that only scant and few
Rose up that devoted crew.

XCVII.

And, moreover, most of those
Who contrived to reach the top,
Found at last that, when they rose,
They got no repose nor stop
In the faint and glimmering light
Of that sad and fateful night.

XCVIII.

The wild splashing of the waves
Told of some who fought their last,
Till they settled down their graves,
Their vain efforts spent and past,
Sometimes ending in a cry
Of despair that rent the sky.

XCIX.

One great negro and myself
Caught one floating piece of wood,
Something like a broken shelf,
And of scarcely any good;
Yet 'twas all the buoyant kind
Of support that we could find

C.

For at night, though not pitch-dark,
Little can one see at sea,
Where, the writer must remark,
The poor swimmer's sight must be
Sunk so deeply, that his eye
Can scarce see things quite close by.

CI.

Safety for a while for one
It might be, but not for two;
Therefore, what was to be done,
What was mortal man to do?
Yet I think and think again
Of that deed with poignant pain.

CII.

Oh, my God! forgive that sin
In thy mercy evermore,
Blotting it without, within,
From Thy reckoning and score
Cleansing it with hyssop clean,
That the sin no more be seen.

CIII.

Fierce and wild was that short strife
When I wrenched away his hold,
Which he held for life, sweet life,
As we all have heard it told
How a drowning man will clasp
E'en a straw with eager grasp.

CIV.

Then with one heart-rending yell
He subsided in the waste,
And a horror none can tell
Flashes through my brain with haste,
When that cry methinks me hears,
Ringing wildly through my ears.

CV.

Yet in calm, reflective mood,
I can't see what else to do,
For the dire dilemma stood :
"One life saved or perished two."
So that instinct played a part
That went far against my heart.

CVI.

Reader, if you roam the main,
Oh, beware of shoals and rocks !
Praying with devout refrain
To evade their blows and knocks,
So that you come not to grief
On some sunken coral reef.

CVII.

At long length the dappled dawn
Glimmered from the womb of night,
And the darkness was withdrawn
To make way for day and light ;
Then, with senses dim and dazed,
I looked round me, sore amazed.

CVIII.

Corpses scattered here and there,
Like so many shapeless lumps,
Threw me into deep despair,
To behold their joyless rumps
Floating on the silent wave
That was doomed to be their grave.

CIX.

Was the sight that met my view,
In that hour of grief and gloom,
Was it false or was it true,
Was it merely froth and fame
Of a weak disordered brain,
That saw visions false and vain?

CX.

Once or twice I felt before,
Waking from a doze of sleep,
Somewhat similarly sore,
In an anguish sharp and deep,
Till a moment's joyful gleam
Showed that it was all a dream.

CXI.

Life itself may be a dream,
As some sages say it is,
But, so far as it could seem
Real—real sure was this
Dreadful scene which I pourtray
In my humble, artless way.

CXII.

Time and times I shook my head,
Which began to burn and ache,
To make sure if in my bed
I might be, but not awake,
As the sombre twilight grey
Slowly paled to open day.

CXIII.

But the facts were far too stern
To be doubted or denied,
And it gave me great concern
To be cast upon the tide,
Helpless, hapless and alone,
When my comrades all were gone.

CXIV.

Then among the drift I saw
A small boat that was capsised,
And I struggled hard to draw
Near her, till I recognized
One lone swimmer out of breath,
Holding by her like grim death.

CXV.

No, I wasn't quite alone,
There was some one else beside;
Though our comrades all were gone,
We were still above the tide;
But how long our lives should last
Was a die of direful cast.

CXVI.

Though the jolly-boat it was,
It was far from jolly now,
For the scene would make one pause,
And the hardest heart would bow,
To behold a sight forlorn
As was ours that fateful morn.

CXVII.

With unspeakable surprise,
As I near and nearer drew,
I could see with languid eyes
What I thought so strange and true;
For none else than Blizzard bold
Stoutly of the boat kept hold.

CXVIII.

Nine long days upon her keel
There poor Blizzard sat and I,
Till our brains commenced to reel,
And our throats got parched and dry;
But our inborn love of life
Still sustained us in this strife.

CXIX.

Shoals of sharks soon gathered round,
Surging upwards from below,
As they always will where found
Sore distress and death and woe,
Showing their devouring maws,
That know neither rules nor laws.

CXX.

Often did I see them swim
Round about to catch our toes,
And they looked so fierce and grim,
When they showed their ugly nose,
As they splashed and rose in sight
Our poor toes to pinch and bite.

CXXI.

Then the courage of despair
Tempted me to frame a plot,
And sharp hunger made me dare
What I otherwise would not ;
So in hopes to save our life,
I took out my whittle-knife.

CXXII.

One came near me more and more,
To catch hold of both my feet,
Which I dangled, but before
He performed a feat so neat,
Just when turning on his back,
Oh, I gave him such a whack !

CXXIII.

The smooth water all around
Flushed and reddened with his blood,
And the rest of them were found
To desert beneath the flood ;
Seeing one of them being slain,
No one else would now remain.

CXXIV.

Then our hoping against hope
Opportunity we seized,
Trying with our fate to cope,
Hoping if great God were pleased,
That some ship would pick us up
From our fell and bitter cup.

CXXV.

So we tried our failing strength
To put right our little boat,
Which we managed at long length,
But she scarcely seemed to float,
Being so water-logged and low,
That her hull scarce seemed to show.

CXXVI.

Then we caught the floating shark,
And we gorged it cold and raw,
Reader, pardon this remark,
For when hunger's worm will gnaw,
It will make the choicest dish
Of the foulest fowl or fish.

CXXVII.

It sounds horrible, 'tis true,
But don't therefore start away,
For the same may hap to you
If you roam the ocean's spray,
And your ship gets wrecked afar
On some sunken bank or bar.

CXXVIII.

I had tasted many cakes,
And plum-puddings not a few,
And whatever boils or bakes
From beef-steak to French ragout;
But of dishes rich or rare
This was far beyond compare.

CXXIX.

And we felt our souls refreshed
By the vigour which it gave,
For though I was stoutly fleshed,
Flesh had vanished on the wave;
Nine long days with want of food,
Being enough to thin one's blood.

CXXX.

We had even gnawed the boat's
Bottom timber, tar and grease,
And had sucked our soaking coats,
And so chewed them piece by piece,
To allay the pains and pangs
Of starvation's tearing fangs.

CXXXI.

When at last we took to bail
Out the water from the craft,
God in heaven! lo, a sail
And some oars, which made me daft
With delirious fits of joy,
So I cried, "Ship, ship, ahoy!!"

CXXXII.

I was raving in my mind,
Not a vessel being in sight,
And I tried to curb my mind
From delusions of delight,
For our state was still, indeed,
Standing in most urgent need.

CXXXIII.

Oh! we baled and baled the boat,
Quite devoted to our task,
Till at last we saw it float
Almost like a buoyant cask,
Then again we hoisted sail,
And steered straight before the gale.

CXXXIV.

And we found some further food
In the bunkers, God be praised!
And some water fresh and good,
Which our drooping spirits raised,
For the boat appeared to be
Newly victualled out for sea.

CXXXV.

But, oh, fickle Fortune blind!
Why poor mortal man deceive?
Why to day to him be kind,
And to morrow make him grieve,
Scourging him with stripes and blows
Till he writhes beneath his woes?

CXXXVI.

Land in due time hove in sight,
Which rejoiced our spirits more,
And we hoped before the night
To be landed safe on shore;
But the more we fled and flew,
More the landscape changed its hue.

CXXXVII.

Often did we change our course,
As the scene from time to time
Changed about with magic force,
Like a changing pantomime,
On the port and larboard now,
Now upon the starboard bow.

CXXXVIII.

We were puzzled what to do,
Though we knew that land was near,
As the ever-changing view
Flew and flickered there and here,
Till at last the twilight screen
Curtained all the shifting scene.

CXXXIX.

So we sat upon our oars
All that solemn livelong night,
Lest our boat on hostile shores
Might be thrown before the light
Made things clearer to our eyes,
So to save us from surprise.

CXL.

Oh! it was an anxious watch,
As each castaway well knows,
So we feared to catch a snatch
Of refreshing sleep's repose;
For we knew, for safety's sake,
It were best to stay awake.

CXLI.

On the next succeeding morn
Land was not so far to seek,
And our souls felt less forlorn
On beholding a lone creek,
Where at last we steered the boat
That had kept us both afloat.

CXLII.

Then I bent my suppliant knees
To the Author of all good,
He who stills the winds and seas,
And calms down the storm and flood;
And I raised my voice anew
Thus to sing His praises due:—

THE PRAYER IN THE CREEK.

I.

O Thou, who commandest the thunder,
And ridest on chariots of light,
Who riftest and rendest asunder
The clouds of the gloomiest night;

Who feedest the rook and the raven,
And guidest the stars throughout space,—
O Thou, who art Lord God of Heaven,
We bend down our knees in this place,
And pray for Thy favour and grace.

2.

To day we are here, and to morrow
Are gone like the grass of the field,
And they who bewail us in sorrow
To death and to sorrow must yield;
For flesh is a vanishing vision,
And life is a fugitive gleam,
That bring us a stage on our mission,
Then end,—and we wake from our dream
On endless Eternity's stream.

3.

No sin is so thick in its darkness,
No corner so far, far away,
No heart is so stiff in its starkness,
Nor flock can have wandered astray,
But Thou, from the height of Thy glory,
Canst see with an all-seeing eye,
And fathom the depth of their story,
And hear from Thy throne upon high
The penitent tone of their cry.

4.

Though we may be weighed and found wanting,
Though black as the pall of the night,
Though full of backsliding and slanting,
Oh, cast us not out of Thy sight!
But save us like brands from the burning,
And all that is low in us raise,
That we may be homeward returning,
Like sinners forsaking their ways,
To sing forth Thy glory and praise.

5.

Thy hand is still strong to deliver,
Thine arm is almighty to save
From mountain and ocean and river,
From even the gloom of the grave;
E'en so from the depth of our anguish,
Wherever on earth we may be,
Ill-fated to linger and languish
In lands distant far o'er the sea,
The spirit can still set us free.

6.

In this lonely nook of a heaven,
Where footsteps may never have trod,
E'en here is Thy finger engraven,
E'en here is Thy presence, O God;
Creation as well as the creature,

The stars through the æther that roll,
And ev'ry frame, form and feature
Thy mighty achievements extol,
And own Thine eternal control.

7.

Lo, here is abundance of flowers
And fruits of the forest and field,
Refreshed by the fragrance of showers
A bountiful harvest to yield;
And He who takes care of the lily
And paints it in all its bright hues,
Can He not be gracious? and will He,
And shall He not save, if He choose,
From even the depth of the ooze?

8.

Then why, oh, my soul, be so lonely
Where God with His presence is near?
But rather put trust in Him only
For why shouldst thou tremble and fear?
For He can give courage to rally
Whatever ill fate may betide,
And e'en through the depth of the Valley
Of Death He will walk by thy side,
Thy footsteps to comfort and guide.

9.

Though blemished with pride and with passion,
Though tarnished, alas! by the Fall,
Shall we, who in feature and fashion
Were crown of Thy handiwork all,

Shall we not in penitence humble
Rely, with unwavering faith,
On mercy, till frail flesh shall crumble,
What time we shall breathe our last breath,
And yield ourselves e'en unto death?

10.

O Lord, we have wavered and wandered
Afar from the pen of Thy fold,
To Mammon and Moloch have pandered,
And bowed to the Calf made of gold;
Have left the clear, crystalline fountains,
Where breathe the frankincense and musk,
And strayed far away on the mountains,
From morning to even and dusk,
Till vanity filled us with husk.

11.

But yet Thou art ready to save us
When worst we may fare in the strife,
For who but Thy mighty hand gave us
The breath of our nostrils for life?
And we who are breathing and living,
Though soon we may stumble and fall,
Will praise Thee with humble thanksgiving,
And yet on Thy name we will call,
And bless Thee, O Lord, God of all.

12.

For even though Death may deprive us
This moment of mere mortal breath,
We know that Thou, God, can revive us
Once more from the bondage of Death;
And so, when the world's fading essence
From vision shall vanish away,
We trust yet to live in Thy presence,
No longer to wander astray,
But walk in Thy statutes for aye.

13.

We thank Thee for safety from dangers
And toils on the treacherous deep,
Where countless loved rovers and rangers
For evermore slumber and sleep;
And now, by Thy mercy and favour,
Oh, blot out our sins with Thy pen,
That so we may live in the Saviour,
Thy name to proclaim among men,
And praise Thee for ever
Amen.

CANTO THE EIGHTH.

I.

I AROSE refreshed and calm,
Such is the great pow'r of pray'r,
That dissolves away like balm
All the burdens of our care,
And can turn the darkest night
Of despair to daylight bright.

II.

But again, on turning round,
What on earth did I behold ?
But, in jeopardy profound,
My companion Blizzard bold,
And it seemed that, after all,
We were destined soon to fall.

III.

We forgot to tie the boat
When we landed on the beach,
So that it was now afloat,
And receding out of reach,
While my comrade Blizzard bold
Strained each nerve to catch a hold.

IV.

Which, indeed, he did, but failed
To make way against the surf,
Till at last I loudly hailed
Him to try and gain the turf,
Lest he might be cast away,
And most likely lost for aye.

V.

He was drifting on and on
When at length he took his jump,
For I knew that he was gone
When I saw him splashing plump;
Then he turned his head once more,
And stretched out to reach the shore.

VI.

But the shore was hard to reach
In the teeth of surf and breeze,
And I held my breath and speech,
As I watched him stem the seas,
And with lusty sinews strong
Buffet the rude waves along.

VII.

Once or twice upon his back
He turned round to take a rest,
But the tide was far from slack,
And thus drove him out to west,
So that he was sore bereft,
Save to cleave it right and left.

VIII.

Near and nearer, here he comes,
Through the surface froth and foam,
Stretching out his toes and thumbs,
As the rover does for home;
And he fought a gallant fight
To reach land with all his might.

IX.

On a sudden down he sank
Underneath the deep-blue wave,
Rose again, but looked quite blank,
And began to shout and rave;
Then I knew, as sure as eggs,
That the cramp had seized his legs.

X.

Lord! it is a woeful sight
To observe one's neighbour drown,
Fit to haunt one day and night,
And so bring one's spirits down,
Till it makes him fear and dread
Spectres from the low-laid dead.

XI.

There I saw him striving hard,
But in vain, to keep afloat,
For his strokes were greatly marred
By the cramps, and I could note
That small progress could he make,
Now then, oh, for heaven's sake!

XII.

Plump I plunged me in the brine
To the rescue once again,
And, what little strength was mine,
I put forth with might and main,
In the hope to save my friend
From his fast-approaching end.

XIII.

Though against me stood such odds,
I struck out with right Godspeed,
Putting all my trust in God's
Pow'r to save in time of need,
Mindful that beneath His eye
All His creatures live and die.

XIV.

Hard it were, indeed, for me
To describe what then took place—
How I strove to save, while he
Caught me in his strong embrace,
And so brought me with him down,
Till it looked as both would drown.

XV.

Up and down we went three times,
And I often lost my breath,
Nor could I in prose or rhymes
Tell how near we went to death,
Or how spared my life was, save
Say 'twas by the merest shave.

XVI.

He relaxed at last his hold,
Giving over the whole strife,
And I feared that Blizzard bold
Was fast pouring out his life;
Then it was, with nimble knack,
That I turned him on his back.

XVII.

And I brought him so on shore,
With enormous push and pull,
But I feared he was no more,
And I felt my eyes grow full
With the dew that Heav'n doth give
For the dead to those who live.

XVIII.

And I did what I was told
Had been done before to me,
But could not, for love or gold,
Drag him to the nearest tree,
There to hang him by the legs
To let flow the briny dregs.

XIX.

Oh! I did my very best,
But, as I was quite alone,
Here I failed to try the best
That had been so surely shown
To have saved myself, indeed,
In my hour of greatest need.

XX.

But I did what I could do
With what knowledge I possessed,
Feeling melancholy too
With sad yearnings in my breast;
Where was now the Doctor dear?
Would to God that he were here!

XXI.

He would put himself about
To the bent of all his skill,
And bring Blizzard safely out
If it were at all God's will;
Being so gifted and humane
To relieve from stress and pain.

XXII.

I had profited a bit
By his learning all the same,
And was anxious to acquit
Myself worthy of my name,
Though unseen by any eye
Except those of God on high.

XXIII.

Fame is only to a few,
But we all can do our best,
That the shades of those we knew
In Valhalla live at rest;
Sure that those they left behind
Never would disgrace mankind.

XXIV.

Need I make the process clear?
Reader, may you ne'er have need,
In your pilgrimage down here,
To such sad details give heed,
But be pleased to pass your days
In more peaceful walks and ways.

XXV.

Whether life was still intact
I could not at all make sure,
For by neither word nor act
Could I certain facts procure;
Though I thought, but could not prove,
That for once I saw him move.

XXVI.

Sad the scene, and short the grace
Was vouchsafed to us that day,
When I saw at rapid pace
A boat enter through the bay—
And, oh, horror! it was all
Filled with warriors stark and tall.

XXVII.

They looked very strong and fierce
With their great long legs and arms,
And an aspect that might pierce
Stoutest hearts with dire alarms,
Being disfigured in such way
As to fill one with dismay.

XXVIII.

Cut and slashed from skin to bone,
They had moles across their cheeks,
And not only that alone,
But where modest men wear breeks,
They tattooed both hip and thigh
With foul fiends of darkest dye.

XXIX.

They had, too, a piece of bone
Passing through their noses' wings,
And their earlobes seemed to groan
With such bones and horrid things;
While their lips protruded far,
Gashed with many a wound and scar.

XXX.

They appeared to tie their hair—
Which was black, and no mistake—
Till each ringlet, I declare,
Looked exactly like a snake,
And the whole like serpents dread,
Coiled around their Gorgon head.

XXXI.

Dress or clothing they wore none,
Save a girdle round their loins,
Made of seashells, of which one
Nearly hung to reach their groins,
Being the shell from which they drank
Human gore when reeking rank.

XXXII.

One of them was all in all
Fairer far than all the rest,
Wearing too a feather tall
For a warlike plume or crest,
And an apron of some leaves
Woven round the waist like Eve's.

XXXIII.

You can see from this detail
What an uninviting crew,
Fit to make the stoutest quail,
With whom I had now to do;
Being so barbarous and grim
To devour one limb by limb.

XXXIV.

Each of them possessed a bow
And a quiver by his side,
And a club, wherewith to blow
Out one's brains in battle tide,
When their raging thirst for blood
Made them pour it forth in flood.

XXXV.

Oh! it was an awful thought,
And which nearly made me sick,
Just to think, as well I ought,
Cannibals would soon picnic,
And devour us burnt and brown,
Ere the sunset settled down.

XXXVI.

To be roasted on a spit
I could scarcely well conceive,
Neither could I deem it fit,
As the reader may believe,
That my fate should be so dire
As to roast on savage fire.

XXXVII.

I remembered where "the Earl
And the Doctor," once before,
Met the wanton copper girl
Whom the Earl would so adore,
And without a bit being shy,
Went and told the tale—oh, fie!

XXXVIII.

Ah, what sorry, sorry end
To ambition's soaring mind!
And I thought, you may depend,
Of old friends I left behind,
Dear to me since days of yore,
Though I'd see them now no more.

XXXIX.

For it struck me it was here,
Or on some adjacent shore,
That the natives with a spear
Murdered Captain Cook before,
And then cooked him—ugh and ugh!!
What a fate to have in view!

XL.

But I'd sell my life so dear,
They'd remember the white man,
And possess a wholesome fear
Of the dauntless way he can
Fight when forced to fight at bay,
E'en when hope has fled away.

XLI.

Lilies painted upon tar
Could have hardly matched their teeth,
As they oped their mouths ajar
And exposed the store beneath,
Which in serried rank and row
Brightly shone like driven snow.

XLII.

Nearly nude as they were born,
Yet was I more naked still,
Without seashells to adorn,
Or with human gore to fill,
Being, in fact—but shame and fie!
I must pass these items by.

XLIII.

There was ne'er a place to hide,
Or where I could flee away,
For I saw that they had spied
Where I was, and there I'd stay
Till the last drop of my blood
Soaked the sand whereon I stood.

XLIV.

Hope had fled, but they would see
What a strength was sheer despair;
Though it seemed all up with me,
Yet I vowed to do and dare,
That if I were doomed to die,
Some of them would lie close by.

XLV.

Lying near me was an oar
Of the boat that went adrift,
For with it I jumped ashore,
And the same once more would lift,
And ourselves therewith defend
To the fell and bitter end.

XLVI.

Though so very hard to wield
Or to handle it with skill,
It must serve for sword and shield,
Just the same to guard and kill,
Which was, if you please to ask,
Far from being an easy task.

XLVII.

They gave out a fearful whoop
When they landed on the shore,
Which might make the boldest stoop
By its very dreadful roar,
And the grim, satanic grin
That suffused their cheeks and chin.

XLVIII.

Then they flourished high their clubs,
Of the hardest lignum made,
Which would throw for downright drubs
Pat's shillalahs in the shade;
And they twirled them up in air
As they do at Don'brook Fair.

XLIX.

With a thrilling, wild war dance
They came forward two and two,
And to see them yell and prance
Made me think what best to do.
But, alas! what could be done
With so many foes 'gainst one?

L.

Yet an only glance I cast
On poor Blizzard lying low,
Knowing not, from what had passed,
Whether life had fled or no;
Then I took my sullen stand,
With my oar well grasped in hand.

LI.

I remembered that the brain
Of barbarians was placed
Not within the skull's domain,
But where boots are daily laced,
In their ankles near the ground,
Where alone their brain is found.

LII.

That their head was hard as stone,
Uncontrolled by blows and knocks,
Was a fact that I had known
Long before we struck the rocks,
For the Doctor told me so,
And, of course, *he* ought to know.

LIII.

But their ankle, no mistake,
Was by far their weakest joint,
So I hoped, for goodness' sake,
To engage them at this point,
And then smite them, hip and thigh,
Ere I tumbled down to die.

LIV.

"Yoicks and Yoicks!" they cried, and came
Brandishing their clubs above,
And with gesture, look and aim
That betokened aught but love;
Till at last they took their ground
Round me in a circle round.

LV.

Close and closer they came near,
And the circle smaller grew,
While I stood defying fear
And the worst the knaves could do;
And I waited hard and fast,
Stern and steadfast to the last.

LVI.

On the dewy, downy grass
My companion Blizzard lay,
Wrapped in slumber deep that was
Motionless and cold as clay,
Looking like the mask of death,
Without sign of life or breath.

LVII.

Just as they commenced to whoop,
As a signal for the fray,
And before the fiends could swoop
On their wretched lonely prey,
Round my head I swept my oar,
And there smote them sick and sore.

LVIII.

You could hear their ankles crack
Like old rattling dead men's bones,
While I served them whack on whack,
Heedless of their cries and groans,
Till at last I cleared a space
Where they dared not show their face.

LIX.

Then the recreants that they were
Kept their distance sure enough,
Knowing that their ankles bare
Could not bear to stand the rough
Usage from my sweeping scythe,
That so mowed them down so blithe.

LX.

But the truce was rather short,
Shorter than I take to write,
When I saw the rogues resort
To a heartless sort of fight,
By discharging arrows keen
Through the space I placed between.

LXI.

Then, indeed, a painful thought
Sickened me with great disgust,
When I thought that warriors fought
Who could be so base to trust,
As to shoot from far away
A lone wretch set hard at bay.

LXII.

Where was honour to be found,
When they deigned to do such things?
Surely buried underground,
Or far flown on soaring wings;
Anywhere but where I stood
Fighting this uneven feud.

LXIII.

With this thought I made a rush,
My last rush, to all surmise,
To defy their arrows' crush,
And so die as valour dies;
And I shouted loud "Here goes!"
As I sprang to meet my foes.

LXIV.

But the warrior with the plume
Shouted an abrupt command :—
" *Volua, volupuk voloom,*"
Which I failed to understand,
But which meant, translated fair :
" Spare the pale-faced stranger, spare."

LXV.

But the shout was doomed to fail,
For already round my ears
Their barbed arrows whizzed like hail,
And soon ended all my fears,
As I fell upon the ground
In a swound profoundly sound.

LXVI.

All was now oblivion pure,
Such as if the dead could live,
And of this I'm certain sure,
In this truthful narrative,
That they often buried men
More alive than I was then.

LXVII.

Was it Upas' potent bane
Which so reigned within my blood,
That it ceased in every vein
To sustain its wonted flood,
Or Curara's baneful dart
That so soundly stilled my heart ?

LXVIII.

Like a real corpse embalmed,
When embalming best was known,
So I lay with breath becalmed,
Like the calmest piece of stone;
And remained with glassy gaze
In that state for days and days.

LXIX.

Were I then on British soil,
I were borne upon a hearse,
And so ended all my toil,
Never more to write a verse,
Or jot down this true detail
Of events that make me quail.

LXX.

As it was, the very first
Thought that occupied my brain
Savoured not of raging thirst,
Nor of hunger's raving pain,
But a feel of blissful ease,
Pleasant beyond bounds to please.

LXXI.

They who haply may have passed
Through the rage of Typhus' fume,
When the "turn" has come at last,
And the fever spent its spume—
They alone have felt the bliss
That succeeds a scene like this.

LXXII.

Little do we value health
When possessed in ample store,
Till we lose the priceless wealth,
And then learn to prize it more;
While we prize it most of all
When relieved from fever's thrall.

LXXIII.

When delirium at long length
Loses all its baneful sway,
And the reason gains its strength,
Rising from its ashes grey,
And the limbs rest quiet and calm,
As if bathed in fragrant balm;

LXXIV.

This is far the favoured time
To give praise for what we owe,
But 'twere very hard in rhyme
To describe the same, or show
The first glimpse of peaceful gleams
That succeeds one's fevered dreams.

LXXV.

Such a joyful change was mine
From the trance in which I fell,
As if some great pow'r divine
Saved me from the gates of hell,
And brought Reason back again
On its own high throne to reign.

LXXVI.

So I tried to bend my knees
In meek penitence and praise,
But, alas! by dire disease
Knees I couldn't bend or raise;
Though my spirit willing was,
Yet my flesh was weak as grass.

LXXVII.

Then by far the uppermost
Tender thought of all my life,
Which was latent but not lost,
Now came back—my wife, my wife!
And it dawned on me again,
Like sweet show'rs of April rain,

LXXVIII.

In whatever clime I roved,
She was mine, my first, my last,
Whom I most sincerely loved
Since the long, long days gone past,
Being 'bove all that I had seen
My heart's dear and peerless queen.

LXXIX.

Fancy then my great surprise,
When I got my senses back,
To behold with languid eyes
A young lady rather black,
Praying in an anguished tone,
That might move a stock or stone.

LXXX.

World of wonder! still more strange,
And beyond my reason's reach,
Was my power of mental range
By which I had learnt her speech,
Though my tongue could not get round
Words of such unchristian sound.

LXXXI.

Truly how the gift did come
I, for one, cannot explain,
Though it might have come by some
Strange telepathy of brain,
During fever's fervent glow
When the brain gets soft as dough.

LXXXII.

What it was let doctors tell,
If the wise presume to know,
But what's Life, and Love?—a spell
Which no sage has dared to show,
Being too deep to analyse
By the wisest of the wise.

LXXXIII.

But the darts of Love we feel
When they hold their potent sway,
Guiding us like goads of steel
Whither they direct the way,
And so lead us by the nose,
Some to weal—and none to woes!!

LXXXIV.

With a wild, impassioned look,
And excited, staring eyes,
She contended with a spook
Whom she tried to exorcise,
And condemn for all the wrong
That subdued my life so long.

LXXXV.

She would place her burning lips
To my still unhealed-up wounds,
And the bane in sudden sips
Would suck out with sucking sounds,
Then anon would rise again
To repeat the selfsame strain.

LXXXVI.

Odd to think of fashion's freaks,
And of passion's curious ways;
What with us soft love bespeaks
Other nations count quite base,
And will pay caresses due
Not at all as we would woo.

LXXXVII.

Then she swayed from side to side,
And her hands tossed to and fro,
Praying that my life's low tide
Might resume its wonted flow,
While her anguish, past control,
Seemed to burst her very soul.

LXXXVIII.

She would sometimes cross my brow
Just like any Christian maid,
And then humbly bend and bow
On her knees to ask for aid,
To drive off the demon blight
That so turned my day to night.

LXXXIX.

Into fury she would lash
Herself wildly yet again,
And her breast and thighs would slash
In her self-inflicting pain,
Then, with folded hands, her eyes
She would raise to seek the skies.

XC.

After whirling round and round,
Now to left and now to right,
She gave out a muffled sound,
Which I'm quite afraid to write,
Being a witchcraft kind of rune
Of a sad and solemn tune:—

THE INCANTATION

I.

Ye spirits, ye spirits of air,
Of earth and the fathomless deep!
I rede ye take heed and beware
Of how ye behave in his sleep;
And thus do I conjure you, vanish away,
And banish yourselves wheresoever ye may.

2.

Flee, flee on the pinions of thought,
To mingle and mix with the main,
The sky or the earth where ye ought
To pine in an adamant chain,
Confined under ponderons boulders and rocks
For ever and aye in the rifts of the rocks.

3.

Thou venomous poison and bane
That alters the current of life,
And curdles the blood in the vein,
Give over, give over the strife,
And vanish in vapour unseen from his blood,
That it may yet flow in the course of its flood.

4.

In depths of the caldron where boil
The souls of the sinners of sin,
In foul-smelling sulphur where broil
The bones and the flesh and the skin,
In Tophet go, seek ye a refuge and flit,
And vanish below to the bottomless pit.

5.

By sign and by token—once,—twice,
By pass I beseech you go free,
Once more I commune with you—thrice,
By sign and by symbol of three,
And come ye, soft zephyrs, and breathe with
your breath,
And wake him again from the semblance of
death.

6.

Time passes away, but the fire
Of passion that burns in the soul
Can never, can never expire,
But all through eternity roll,
And now I have spoken, ye spirits of doom,
I rede ye be gone to Cimmerian gloom!

XCI.

This was surely very strange
From the lips of savage maid,
But in real scope and range
Was the gist of what she said,
Though the idioms of her speech
Were too hard to talk or teach.

XCII.

Fierce and frantic though she was,
There was something grand of grace
In her strange demeanour as
In her handsome frame and face,
As she stood before me there
With wild looks and flowing hair.

XCIII.

Talk of kings' and lords' and earls'
Priceless wealth of gold and gem,
They were dross beside the pearls
In her blazing diadem,
While the eardrops from her ears
Shone like heaven's sparkling spheres.

XCIV.

There were rubies of each kind
From the hue of pigeons' blood,
Nor did diamonds lack behind
In their water clear of flood,
And the sapphires' azure hue
Mingled the red, white and blue.

XCV.

Precious rings were on her toes,
And rich anklets graced her feet,
There were jewels in her nose,
Round her wrists were bracelets neat,
While her maiden waist was spanned
With a diamond sash or band.

XCVI.

Venus rising from the foam
Might perhaps have been more white,
Otherwise the scene brought home
To my mind the kind of sight
Wanton Venus ought to be,
Rising from deep blue sea.

XCVII.

And her "girdle," oh! was such
As could only have been made
By a Vulcan hand, whose touch
Knew the secrets of his trade,
Like the sash that Venus wore
Round her waist in days of yore.

XCVIII.

When she turned away her eyes
Then I watched her with keen care,
And was struck with great surprise
When I recognised the fair,
Buxom maid in life's first bloom
As the warrior with the plume !

XCIX.

There the apron of green leaves,
Worked so deftly round about,
Which at once proclaimed her Eve's
Winsome daughter out and out,
Though she almost lacked the same
Sense of nakedness and shame.

C.

She it was, when worst I fared
In yon savage, wild attack,
Who had graciously spared
My poor life against the pack
Of Hell's hounds that wished to feed
Off my bones with godless greed.

CI.

Her contentions being at end,
She again turned round to look
If I promised soon to mend
Or still serve the demon spook,
Who, she thought, possessed my soul
Under witchcraft's dark control.

CII.

When she saw I was awake,
With the fever past and gone,
Then her frame began to quake
Like a reed by breezes blown,
In a sudden burst of joy
She could not conceal or cloy.

CIII.

Her affections took a turn
That looked very strange to me,
For the fire that seemed to burn
Her hot bosom, now flashed free,
And assumed an outward shape
Such as I would fain escape.

CIV.

To the readers of this tale
Who are used to luring arts,
How on earth can I unveil
What prevails in foreign parts,
The odd customs and strange ways
That are deemed worth greatest praise?

CV.

Some of them would simply mock
The meek modesty of some,
Others just as sure would mock
The mere modest modicum
Of good sense that some attain
Over brutes that roam the plain.

CVI.

Did she catch me in her arms
When she saw my life revive?
Did she proffer maiden charms
Which make swains look all alive?
Did she, did she with her lips
Steal a few sweet stolen sips?

CVII.

Pshaw! she rubbed me nose to nose
Till *my* nose began to bleed,
And she squeezed my thumbs and toes
Till I felt disposed to screed;
But the lip-to-lip sweet cure
Never struck my paramour.

CVIII.

Her advances I refused,
Being, of course, a married man,
Nor for worlds would have abused
The pure love of Mary Anne,
Whom I left so far forlorn
On a certain bygone morn.

CIX.

Earth has many a scene to scan,
Many a sermon to convey,
Which appeal to mind of man
To observe their fair array,
And to hear the still, small voice
That bids Nature all rejoice.

CX.

Who has ever cast an eye
On the bonnie mountains blue,
But would wish to live and die
Gazing on their faithful view,
And at last, with hope and trust,
Mingle with their noble dust?

CXI.

To behold the silent stream
Wending through the verdant plain,
Makes my wayward fancies dream
Over stream and mount and main,
With its calm, eternal roll
That speaks volumes to the soul.

CXII.

When I see the blithesome lark
Soaring up the azure sky,
And the brutes that howl and bark
In the forest far and nigh,
My mind rises from the sod
To the great Creation's God.

CXIII.

Watching the mild autumn breeze
Waving through ripe fields of corn,
Fills my heart with ecstasies
On the wings of zephyrs borne,
As they wreathe their fragrant balm
Over scenes so quiet and calm.

CXIV.

Dawn of day and gloaming's gloom,
Sun and moon and lambent stars,
Winter wild and summer's bloom,
Rugged rocks and rifted scaurs,
Are all beautiful to view
In their varied shades of hue.

CXV.

Yea, the very storm and flood
Have a glamour wild for me,
Though they freeze my languid blood
Thinned by lands across the sea;
Yea, although the howling blasts
Rend the sails from spars and masts.

CXVI.

But the loveliest sight of all
Is soft woman's face and form,
Under whose bewitching thrall
Man will rush through calm and storm,
And will fight and win or die
For a glance from her bright eye.

CANTO THE NINTH.

I.

'Twas a great red-letter day,
Red, alas ! with human gore,
That which, much to my dismay,
Marked my crisis past and o'er,
When they poured life's crimson blood
Reeking in one stintless flood.

II.

The dread sight of their foul feast
Was too awful to review,
For the feast was not of beast
But of men and maids they slew,
And whose blood dropped down in drips
From their gory mouths and lips.

III.

With bewildered eyes I looked
At the flesh-pots scattered round,
If poor Blizzard might be cooked,
And so served done up and browned,
Till at last there met my sight
Two stout legs that looked quite white.

IV.

"Ah!" thought I, "is this the end
Of my good, old Guzzle Goose?
Who was such a faithful friend,
Though now served to basest use."
And I tried my eyes to screen
From the foul, revolting scene.

V.

What to him was now the good
Of his hoarded gold and pelf?
And the same reflection stood
When I mused about myself,
Whom a senseless craze to roam
Stranded far from hearth and home.

VI.

Rukhma never once partook
Of the feast that they prepared,
But was constant on the look
Out to see how well I fared,
While the fiends that sat close by
Gorged themselves with gloating eye.

VII.

What a dreadful thing to think
That these lives were lost for me!
And the feast to eat and drink
Kept when I was fever free,
To rejoice the festive board
When I got my health restored

VIII.

They sat down to drink and eat
Human flesh and scarlet gore,
They rose up for frantic feat,
Mingled with inhuman roar,
And I loathed the grimy crew
Drunk with blood of those they slew.

IX.

As they revelled one and all
In this awful dance of death,
Their wild freaks were fit to pall
And to take away one's breath,
As they hissed these jarring notes
From their foul, discordant throats :—

THE WAR DANCE.

I.

Oh, sing to the tune of the old Tooderuck,
Strike up on the cords of the Gunder,
And blood let us drink to bring plunder and pluck,
Our victims to trample down under ;
And so let us fill our shells full of red gore,
Although 'twere the gore of a brother,
And then we shall spill and refill them once more
With gore of one form or another.

2.

The flesh of the porpoise is good in its way,
And those of foul fowl, flesh and fishes,
The vulture and dog-fish, the shark and the ray,
For want of more savoury dishes;
And sweet is the flesh of the kangaroo's calf,
With clotted blood reeking and laden,
But where is the tit-bit so tender by half
As that of the youth and the maiden?

3.

For old men are stringy, and sapless, and tough,
With warfare and hardship all wasted,
And hags are both haggard and ragged enough,
And far from the bite to be tasted;
But none can deny that the pride and the boast
Of dishes that make the mouth water,
When once we can get it on embers to roast,
Are aye the young son and the daughter.

4.

So romp we together and tread we the dance,
And reel till our heels we can raise not,
And all in glad revelry tumble and prance,
For who such a banquet must praise not?

And sing of the feast that our sovereign's hand
Provided this day for our pleasure,
To slay the young kids and fat lambs of the land,
Yoho! for the maze and the measure!

5.

Yoho! we shall revel till midnight and dawn,
Yoicks, Yoicks! we shall roar out and bellow,
And whirligig round on the grass-covered lawn,
Made drunk with the gore of our fellow;
And quaff to the stranger in scarlet poteen,
And praise him through lowland and highland,
Yoho! for a toast to our glorious queen,
The Queen of the Cannibal Islands!

x.

So they whirled them round and round
Through that dreadful livelong night,
Till my ears could hear no sound,
And my eyes could see no sight;
For the more and more I gazed,
More my brain grew dim and dazed.

XI.

It was Rukhma ruled the land,
As was evident enough,
With a strong despotic hand,
Sometimes smooth and sometimes rough,
As it pleased her monarch mind
To be gracious or unkind.

XII.

Land of Goshen! here I was
Chosen consort of a queen,
In whose person all the laws
Of the land were to be seen,
And whose merest whispered breath
Sealed one's fate for life or death.

XIII.

Here, if I had such desire,
I might live a savage king,
With a queen who would admire
Myself more than any being
Who had landed on that shore
Since remotest years of yore.

XIV.

But my home's domestic faith
Held its reign within my breast,
And would reign until my death
Set all fears and doubts at rest,
Nor could queen or sceptre's sway
Lead my mind one jot astray.

XV.

It was awkward, all the same,
To be favoured in this style
By a high and mighty dame,
On whose careless nod and smile
All her subjects humbly hung,
With still breath and bated tongue.

XVI.

And at times I found it hard
To discard her proffered love,
From which I was quite debarred,
Since the day, with hand and glove,
When I pledged my promise true,
Which to break would never do.

XVII.

I was sorely grieved to see
How she brooded day and night,
Through her passion wild for me,
Which I dared not well requite,
By that solemn, sacred vow
I had pledged so long ago.

XVIII.

Be it said, for once and all,
To prevent a bad mistake,
Rukhmâ was no cannibal,
Otherwise, for Heaven's sake!
I would not in word or phrase
Write one stanza in her praise.

XIX.

She, in truth, with all her soul,
Loathed the orgies of her tribe,
But she found them past control,
And all order to proscribe,
When the frenzy seized their blood
To drink gore in stintless flood.

XX.

How her unrequited love
A meet outlet now might find,
Made me fear my turtle-dove
In revenge might change her mind,
And relieve her inward strife
By depriving me of life.

XXI.

True it was my native shore
And my home and darling spouse
I would likely see no more,
Yet would I observe my vows,
Like a father ever true
To his wife and bairnies two.

XXII.

But oh! Love, when very strong,
Is not selfish, no, no, no,
But endureth late and long
Pangs and wrongs and so, so, so,
And will rush through flood and fire
For the idol of desire.

XXIII.

Such was Rukhma and her love,
Queen and empress though she was,
Soft and sweet as cooing dove,
In accord with Nature's laws;
For love conquers frail mankind,
And soothes down and melts the mind.

XXIV.

Often did we, hand in hand,
Wander through the wood and mead,
Quite platonic, understand,
In so far as I agreed
There to roam the whole day long,
Without dream of doing wrong.

XXV.

But by far the awkward part
Was to talk my real mind,
Or explain the way my heart
Had been left so far behind,
And was now no more my own,
To bestow on queen or throne.

XXVI.

When I watched her by my side,
Trembling in full bloom of life,
With her love at war with pride,
As the winds and tides at strife,
I felt sad, though I could not
Help her in her hapless lot.

XXVII.

I could understand her speech
As well almost as my own,
But by no means could I teach
Or my speech to her make known,
Which made matters worse and worse,
And debarred all calm discourse.

XXVIII.

But by rubbing nose to nose,
And such modes of look and feel,
I contrived to soothe her woes,
And her racking sores to heal,
Though they soon broke out again
With fresh force and poignant pain.

XXIX.

So the days and weeks passed by,
Bathed in Rukhma's tears and smiles,
Mixed with many a heaving sigh,
Breathing out those wreathing wiles,
Which are woman's sharpest darts
To transfix men's stubborn hearts.

XXX.

But I longed to get away,
If the truth be fairly told,
And so watched by creek and bay
If some sail I might behold;
Scouring the horizon blue
For some ship to heave in view.

XXXI.

From the top of one steep rock
I looked out for days and days,
Till false visions came to mock
And deceive my anxious gaze,
While tall ships appeared to rise
Right before my anxious eyes.

XXXII.

I was thunderstruck with awe
As I gazed from this same cliff,
When, behold! I plainly saw
A poor ghost appear, as if
He had sprung from out the grave,
Or some dark and lonesome cave.

XXXIII.

He was of an ochre tint,
And quite naked too, of course,
Came in view for just a glint,
And then vanished by some force;
Leaving me to think and pause
Who on earth the spectre was.

XXXIV.

I observed he had no shells
Round his waist, nor was his nose
Pierced about with bones and bells,
And, although he wore no clothes,
He had far more modest grace
Than belonged to this rude race.

XXXV.

He was also not tattooed,
Like the warriors of the tribe,
Though his matted hair outstood
In a way I can't describe,
And his face, though smudged enough,
Was not either scarred or rough.

XXXVI.

He appeared, from time to time,
As if he desired to speak,
And confess some awful crime,
Then again away would sneak,
For some reason of his own,
Quite mysterious and unknown.

XXXVII.

I took notice at long last
That he seldom would appear
When with Rukhma I went past,
Or my bodyguard was near;
For I had a bodyguard,
As Queen Rukhma's favoured ward.

XXXVIII.

When the natives heard the tale
That a wraith was round about,
They began to fear and quail,
And would scarcely dare go out
Where the ghost was to be seen,
Stalking up and down the green.

XXXIX.

For barbarians, one and all,
Stark and tall although they be,
Crouch in superstition's thrall,
Quite appalled, as you can see,
Of the sprites that dwell in caves,
And the ghosts that rise from graves.

XL.

For the first to do and dare,
And not spare the foe in fight,
Might be first to catch a scare
From a wraith or secondsight,
And be filled with fear and woe
If the bogus cried but "Boh!"

XLI.

On a calm and sultry eve
Down I sat on yon same stone,
Gave my bodyguard their leave
There to leave me all alone,
To reflect and peer and gaze
Through the gloaming's misty haze.

XLII.

Suddenly, on turning round,
I was startled with such start,
That my pulse gave quite a bound
From the flood-gates of my heart,
Being so taken by surprise
By the sight that met my eyes.

XLIII.

Armed with bow and rusty spear,
In the falling shades of night,
Guess what sorry wight came near
And appeared before my sight;
Why then, if the truth be told,
'Twas none else than Blizzard bold!

XLIV.

"Grave of Moses!" I cried out,
"Are you still alive, my friend?
Long since I had ceased to doubt
Of your sad, untoward end,
And are you my lately lost,
Or my faithful friend's mere ghost?"

XLV.

"I guess, stranger," answered he,
"I am still that self-same bloke
Whom you now before you see
Bowed and bent with Fortune's stroke,
But right glad, in spite of pain,
E'en to meet once more again."

XLVI.

He was overgrown with hair
In the cave wherein he dwelt,
And possessed a startled air
From the constant care he felt,
Fearing lest he lost his life
To the ruthless savage knife.

XLVII.

And the ochre tint he wore
Was but clothes of native clay,
So as to protect the more
From Apollo's scorching ray,
And disguise him from the ken
Of these wild, bloodthirsty men.

XLVIII.

"Why," cried I, "as sure as eggs,
If my memory serves me right,
I have witnessed both your legs
Cooked and served before my sight,
Which I saw the varlets eat
As a treat of choicest meat!"

XLIX.

But it wasn't Blizzard hight
They had roasted to a stew,
But some poor ill-fated wight
From, perhaps, a shipwrecked crew,
Who were thrown upon the beach
Within these barbarians' reach.

L.

Blizzard then detailed his tale,
Which was passing rare and odd,
How he slumbered still and stale,
Lying bare upon the sod,
Till he slowly woke at last,
Quite bewildered at what passed.

LI.

He could not recall, he said,
How I saved him from the surf,
How I struggled to his aid,
Till I laid him on the turf,
And then strove in dire defence,
Till I lost all sight and sense.

LII.

All he knew were vivid dreams
Of the long-forgotten past,
Bursting on his soul in gleams
Like the sunbeams flashing fast,
So that all his life gone by
Swept at once before his eye.

LIII.

When he rose and looked around,
He was startled with the blood
That was spilt upon the ground
Round the spot whereon he stood,
And betokened fearful strife,
Rife with loss of limb and life.

LIV.

Nat'rally he thought that mine
Was among the clotted gore,
There being also ample sign
It was mingled with some more,
By the way it soaked the ground
Here and there and all around.

LV.

"Poor old Mucklemouth," said he,
"Fought his last encounter well,
For I guess by land or sea
He his life would dearly sell,
And so close his eyes at last,
As became his previous past."

LVI.

Then he fled and found a cave
Where he saved himself from sight,
And in which the ocean wave
Flowed and ebbed by day and night,
And wherein he also found
Our small boat gone fast aground!

LVII.

I suppose, when first I fell
Under Rukhma's watchful eye,
That she found it hard to tell
Whether I should live or die;
So that all her anxious care
Was to watch how I should fare.

LVIII.

They considered Blizzard dead,
So they left him where he was,
As a prey for vultures dread,
To be torn by carrion claws
On the spot whereon he lay,
Like a piece of lifeless clay.

LIX.

Why not eat him like the rest,
As their wont was so to do?
Just because they deemed it best,
Lest a plague might then ensue,
That no flesh was worth being grilled
Save that only that was killed.

LX.

Thus was Blizzard left alone,
To dissolve in open air,
Lying there as still as stone,
Without farther thought or care,
When at length the cruel crew
With their wounded fare withdrew.

LXI.

Then came back upon my mind
How I laboured on the beach
Where poor Blizzard lay reclined,
Both deprived of sense and speech,
And how well I used my skill
To procure his cure from ill.

LXII.

I remembered too the groan
And the moan he made and sigh,
And I bowed before the throne
Of Almighty God on high,
Who had helped me to defend
And preserve my faithful friend.

LXIII.

Then we both began to plan
Schemes to manage our escape,
Till at last our plans began
To assume more plastic shape,
Which was first to launch the boat
And then trust our fate afloat.

LXIV.

Blizzard played the bogus still,
And I played the cunning rogue,
Trying all my tricks of skill,
Since I failed to speak their brogue,
To instil such wholesale fear,
That the knaves scarce dared come near.

LXV.

I suspected more of late
Dark designs upon my life,
And began to fear my fate
Was to end in blood and strife,
Though, as yet, Queen Rukhma's smiles
Shielded me from secret wiles.

LXVI.

It was on Saint Andrew's Eve
That I gazed from yon same rock,
When a sail I could perceive,
Which my senses seemed to mock
As I looked, and there it lay
Quite becalmed outside the bay.

LXVII.

On that mirk and moonless night,
On the limpid, languid wave,
'Twas we strove with all our might
Once for all to leave the cave,
And again put out to sea,
Be our fate whate'er might be.

LXVIII.

As the peep of morning broke,
We had hoisted up our sail,
And appeared beneath the rock,
Where so oft I stood to hail
Passing sails that might appear,
Though no sail till now came near.

LXIX.

On the very topmost cliff
There stood Rukhma on that morn,
With an air of frantic grief,
And her hair deranged and torn,
Like an eagle which of late
Might have lost her soaring mate.

LXX.

Soon as we appeared in view
She gave out a piercing scream,
On which gathered to pursue
A stout crew and warlike cream
Of that fierce and swarthy band,
Under Rukhma's own command.

LXXI.

Oh! we whistled for a breeze,
But no breath of breeze would blow,
Not so much as e'en a sneeze
Through the seas would make us go,
For the wind, alas! had dropped,
And our craft as surely stopped.

LXXII.

We betook us to our oars
As our only last resource
To take leave of these strange shores
And escape by mere main force;
For we knew that "now or nay,"
So we hied away, away.

LXXIII.

Oh, what frightful hue-and-cry
They gave out in their canoes!
Coming onward nigh and nigh,
As the hound the hare pursues,
Straining every nerve at pinch,
And so gaining inch by inch.

LXXIV.

Then we stretched our sinews both
To approach the friendly ship,
Cleaving through the foam and froth
With good will and eager grip,
To avoid the furious foes
Who pursued with spears and bows.

LXXV.

Hardly had we climbed the side,
When the scamps were also there,
Then commenced the battle-tide
And the shrieks of wild despair,
As with frantic yells and cheers
'Mong our ranks they plied their spears.

LXXVI.

Lethal weapons burnished bright,
Brandished with strong arms on high,
Sparkled with a play of light
Almost dazzling to the eye,
As they glanced from side to side
All around us far and wide.

LXXVII.

How bold Blizzard bravely fought
It is not for me to tell,
Save that I most surely thought
That he truly fought as well
As the God of warfare wars,
Or best son of Stripes and Stars.

LXXVIII.

Thrice they boarded us amain,
Thrice again we cleared the decks,
Their great strength being spent in vain
To prevail against our checks;
Though it cannot be denied
That a goodly portion died.

LXXIX.

There was Rukhma, spear in hand,
Standing on her war-junk's prow,
Wild and frantic, yet so grand,
With her arching neck and brow,
That she looked the finest maid
Whom my eyes had e'er surveyed.

LXXX.

Sorely tried although I was
To defend my wretched life,
I could not forget the cause
That had caused her all the strife,
As I marked her stately form
Breast the battle's raging storm.

LXXXI.

In the midst of all the fray,
While more junks were gathered round,
One stray shot, I grieve to say,
An unsought-for target found,
Lodging, with an aim unblest,
In Queen Rukhma's noble breast.

LXXXII.

Then she sank with downcast eyes,
With her spear still clinched in hand,
As the warrior dŏes who dies
Fighting for his native land,
True, as long as life can last,
To his cause both hard and fast.

LXXXIII.

In her life's fast ebbing swoon
She appeared still lovelier grown,
Dying in the heyday noon
Of her days without a groan,
But with sweet angelic smile
That revealed her want of guile.

LXXXIV.

She gave one upbraiding look
At myself before she died,
And I felt the sore rebuke
Looking at her streaming side,
As she yielded her last breath,
And so sealed her eyes in death.

LXXXV.

Struck with horror at her fate,
Of which I was sure the cause,
I could not endure the state
Of remorse in which I was;
But on seeing her bosom gored,
On the deck threw down my sword.

LXXXVI.

Then they raised a fearful whoop
Of revenge that shook the sky,
And again to gain the poop
They fought bravely—but to die;
For our tars, though scant and few,
Were a brave and daring crew.

LXXXVII.

For a breeze sprang up just then,
Bending down our masts and sails,
And soon swept away the men
Who still clung outside our rails!
And our bark then bounded free
O'er the boundless, deep blue sea.

LXXXVIII.

"*Sprecken sie*," the captain cried,
"*Deutch or Hollands*." "No," I said;
And just then, as I replied,
The brave captain fell down dead
From a wound he had received,
And we all sincerely grieved.

LXXXIX.

By my troth, he proved as brave,
In that fight in which we stood,
As e'er knight that wore a glaive,
And was quite as brave of blood,
Being a Dutchman of the bold,
Roving lot of days of old.

XC.

His mere mortal last remains,
And remains of certain some,
We embalmed with greatest pains,
And submerged in casks of rum,
And there kept them for awhile
Till we hailed fair Java's Isle.

XCI.

We interred him there among
His own kith, though far from home,
Singing o'er his grave a song
Sung by those who love to roam;
Then we left him there to rest
With his God, whose name be blest.

XCII.

Well the Dutch deserved my praise,
For where'er my footsteps went,
They obliged in kindly ways,
So to make my days content;
And put oft themselves about
To explain my wayward route.

XCIII.

I took note with old and young
Everywhere I chose to go,
That, though knowing not my tongue,
They were always glad to show
Every kindness and supply
To my wants as passer-by.

XCIV.

Boero Boeder's Buddhist shrine,
Most imposing shrine I saw,
Wrapt my soul in thoughts divine,
With profound and pious awe,
As before me there it stood
In its matchless magnitude.

XCV.

Greatest wonder of three days'
Work this wondrous world has seen,
And all built in Buddha's praise,
Long, long ere had Islam been
To supplant the Buddhist faith,
As a scythe mows down the swathe.

XCVI.

With Sumatra to our port,
To our starboard Banca's strand,
Through the sleeping waves we sport,
Seldom losing sight of land,
Till at last we reach the shore
And great port of Singapore.

XCVII.

Past Hong-Kong's imposing peak,
Past Formosa's stately isle,
Past the sandy bar and creek
Of Shanghai, we steered the while;
Till lo! here's remote Cheefoo,
Here Tientsin appears in view.

XCVIII.

Then to visit strange Pekin,
Ancient site of China's throne,
I must ride through thick and thin,
Over rut and ridge and stone;
And reach even the Great Wall
That still braves the gale and squall.

XCIX.

In my wayward wanderings
By yon mountains far away,
I beheld the tombs of kings,
The great Khans of far Cathay,
And bowed down with homage due
To past glory strange but true.

C.

Temples built to heav'n, to earth,
Holy fanes to sun and moon,
And pagodas without dearth,
There I viewed by morn and noon ;
Till I knew not which it was,
Buddha's or Confucius' cause.

CI.

But religion's sacred theme
I presume not here to touch,
Being apart from this my scheme
Here and there to ramble much,
And jot down with random pen
Thoughts that struck me there and then.

CII.

In due time I saw the Khan,
Quite an awful being to see,
To whom eunuchs came to fawn,
Groping on each hand and knee,
And whose concubines and wives
Might well mar a thousand lives.

CIII.

Seated on a throne of gold,
With a crown upon his head,
In deep awe did I behold
This great lord and monarch dread,
So I bowed down to the ground,
As the rest did all around.

CIV.

But he touched me with a wand,
Or a sceptre, as might be,
Told me rise again and stand
In his presence frank and free,
And then tell him with what aim
And strange purpose there I came.

CV.

"Live for ever, oh, great Khan!"
I replied, and bent full low.
"Here I come at venture drawn
To your Majesty, to know
Why you pass your youth's best days
In such hermit walks and ways.

CVI.

"For the light that lights a throne
Is not thrown on you at all,
Being confined so much alone
By four corners of a wall,
That none ever sees your face
Out of this enchanted place.

CVII.

"Put away your thousand wives,
One will quite suffice for you,
For they're only chains and gyves
When they number even two;
And most likely—when they're bad—
To drive all the wisemen mad.

CVIII.

"So dismiss your eunuch slaves,
Sending them the right-about,
For their presence but depraves
And degrades you out and out,
As a mere unworthy toy
On good taste that soon should cloy.

CIX.

"Then be worthy of your throne,
And expose yourself to sight,
Take example from our own
Mighty throne and monarch bright,
How she rambles there and here,
Free and easy without fear.

CX.

"Open up your country great,
Making railways every route,
With good roads throughout your state,
So that all may tramp about;
And if lacking money to
Do the same—we'll give it you."

CXI.

Then I bowed myself again,
Waiting what the Khan might say,
Who, in order to explain,
Spoke quite plainly, glib and gay,
And assured me it was his
Strong desire to welcome this.

CXII.

But that some intriguing men
Were around his ancient throne,
With the world beyond their ken,
Quite untravelled and unknown;
So that it required some smart
Patriot these works to start.

CXIII.

"Why," said he, "the famous Fane
Of great Heav'n is just burnt down,
And portentous floods again
Make us fear the gods may frown."
"Pshaw!" said I, "don't think of that;
Do your duty—that is what."

CXIV.

Thus we spoke for half the day,
Gaining information much,
He had lots enough to say,
And I told him such and such;
Then we closed the interview,
And I bowed and then withdrew.

CXV.

Soon a lady of the land
Spoke quite blandly to my face,
And though neither young nor grand,
Yet not all devoid of grace,
Till I looked and saw her feet,
Then I beat a sharp retreat.

CXVI.

"Why, on earth," cried I, "have you
Such a puny pair of legs?"
"Oh," she answered, "that they do
As they squelch with rags and dregs
Our poor childhood's tiny toes,
And so fill our lives with woes."

CXVII.

"Well," said I, "I'd rather stilts
Than deformed to see you so."
"Yes," she said, "but stilts or kilts,
Even so we all must go;
Since compressed and bound are we
Till fifteen from age of three.

CXVIII.

"Husbands fear we'd rove from home
Had we legs wherewith to stray,
Prove unfaithful, and so roam
Without bound in every way;
But they're wrong; we'd still prove true,
E'en of feet if we had two."

CXIX.

Then a Johnnie sauntered round,
Who was this one but his wife?
And far, far from him being bound,
He had flippers large as life,
But his pigtail sure would spoil
His success in brunt of broil.

CXX.

"Now," quoth I, "you look as queer,
With that pigtail at your back,
As your little wife does here,
Though her feet do almost lack.
Pray, what good is it to you,
This long rope so strange to view?"

CXXI.

"Well," said John, "though in a scrape
They might trail me on the ground"—
"Yes," cried I, "without escape,
They could skelp you round and round,"
"But," quoth John, "with this, when gone,
I'll be hauled to heaven's throne."

CXXXII.

The debate that then ensued
Were no good pursuing here,
But I tried to do him good,
By denuding all his mere
Nonsense of a senseless creed,
That must fail in hour of need.

CXXIII.

'Way, away, I mustn't stay,
For we *yet have lands to see,*
And *of each can only say*
As few *words as well can be;*
For this *roving, wayward song*
Keeps me prattling far too long.

CXXIV.

But my voy'ge was also long,
Longer than I dreamt at first,
And what use to write it wrong,
Or unless I dared to burst
Mere conventional decrees,
And so jot my voy'ge at ease?

CXXV.

Round the tall Corean coast,
Tinsen, Gensen, and Fusán,
O'er the waves we gaily tossed,
Till at length our ship we ran
Past each haven, cave, and rock,
Till we hailed Vladivostók.

CXXVI.

It was pure as one would wish
In its atmospheric hue,
With the snow in heap and dish
Scattered round the mountains blue;
And the harbour was so grand
That I rather liked this land.

CXXVII.

Oh! Siberia was cold
At this coldest time of year,
Yet was I not quite so old
As not roam up even here,
Though the frost was biting keen
Over all the hoar demesne.

CXXVIII.

The good friends that met me here,
Russians and Dutch and Danes,
Shall to me be ever dear
When blood mingles in my veins,
Being at heart, I hope, a man
Quite a cosmopolitan.

CXXIX.

After divers days at sea,
Across many a rock and isle,
At long last then anchored we
One fine day in sailors' style;
And what land that now I scan?
'Tis the strand of far Japan!!

CANTO THE TENTH.

I.

By the grace of God above,
Lovers love like cooing dove,
To return to their first love,
Even so
Do I cherish, right or wrong,
The sweet symphony of song,
With which I set out so long,
Long ago.

II.

Since I left it but for change,
In surveying such a range,
Knowing well how true, though strange,
Is the fact
That to sometimes change our tune,
Not too often or too soon,
Will enhance each opportune
Word and act.

III.

How can I describe this land !
For its heights and valleys grand
Would require a master's hand
At the pen ;
Seeing how its sights enthral,
Like sweet syrup of chloral,
And a trance throw over all
Sorts of men.

IV.

Oh, the Sea, the Inland Sea,
Fresh and fair as fair could be,
How it stole my heart from me
With its spell !
For of scenes by east or west,
It would rank among the best,
With its islands where the blest
Ones might dwell.

V.

Nagasáki's port to view,
Gotto, Shimmon, Kobe too,
Charmed me till they drew the dew
From my gaze ;
And the countless islands spread,
Bathed in their enchanting bed,
Beggared all that can be said
In their praise.

VI.

Kioto's temples, Shogun's grave,
Hara-Kiri of the brave,
Rapids wild that lash and lave,
Raised my blood;
Till I felt my fancies stray
Out of this mere mortal clay,
Over mountains and the spray
Of the flood.

VII.

'Way, away, I mustn't stay,
Nor long linger nor delay,
Short my time and long the way
Yet to roam;
So I must my cable slip,
And let go my gallant ship,
Homeward bound upon her trip
Through the foam.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

I.

Homeward bound on the ocean wave,
Homeward bound,
Homeward bound over heroes' grave,
Homeward bound;
Homeward bound though the storm-sprites split,
Though thunder and lightning flash and flit,
Or the night be as dark as the darkest pit,
Homeward bound!

2.

Homeward bound through the doldrum seas,
Homeward bound,
With sails all flapping without a breeze,
Homeward bound;
Where the sun pours down his downright rays,
Without a rain-cloud for days and days,
And the sea is lit in one brilliant blaze,
Homeward bound!

3.

Homeward bound where the trade-winds blow,
Homeward bound,
And the goodship speeds with a foaming prow,
Homeward bound;
With stunsails set, and every patch
Of canvas hoisted the gale to catch,
And the sailors have only to wait and watch,
Homeward bound!

4.

Homeward bound from the foreign strand,
Homeward bound,
To our own true love native land,
Homeward bound;
From the false strangers we may have met
And left, departing without regret,
For Auld Lang Syne which we ne'er forget,
Homeward bound!

5.

Homeward bound from Pole to Pole,
Homeward bound;
From East and West where the billows roll,
Homeward bound;
From every corner around the world,
Through gentle breeze or by tempest hurled,
Over the wave with sails unfurled,
Homeward bound!

6.

Homeward bound with a stout, stout heart,
Homeward bound,
For ever faithful to play our part,
Homeward bound;
With willing hands we shall haul the sails,
And court the breath of the passing gales,
Till the salt froth foams round our roving sails,
Homeward bound!!

VIII.

So our vessel, homeward bound,
Bounded like a coursing hound,
With slack sheet and swishing sound
Through the seas;
Farewell, faëryland, Japan.
Catch me, "Brownies," if you can,
With our sails set spick and span
To the breeze.

IX.

Farewell, Fujiyama great,
Sitting in majestic state
Lonely there, without a mate
To be seen;
While the humbler hills around,
In mute reverence profound,
Bow themselves to kiss the ground
For their queen.

X.

Oh! it is a stately mount,
Holy held as sacred fount,
But how hard to give account
Of its sway!
For whoever, for the nonce
Sees it, if but only once,
Will fast hold it in his sconce
Once for aye.

XI.

Sunset, and it looms up there,
All alone in upper air,
Crowned and clothed with robes so fair
Of pure snow;
Ev'ning, and the shades grow grey,
Twilight tolls the knell of day,
Till night hides it right away
As we go....

XII.

Then, and not till then, did I
Wave my handkerchief on high,
And with goodwill said good-bye
To the land;
And though fate may have in store
That I ne'er shall view it more,
Blessings rest upon its shore
And its strand.

XIII.

Time rolled on, and so did we
Rock and roll in merry glee
Through the rough and raging sea
Of the North;
Till one night I raised my eyes
To the cloudless, azure skies,
And, perhaps, you may surmise
What beamed forth.

XIV.

Old acquaintances on high
Shone and sparkled in the sky,
Welcoming me far and nigh,
From the South;
And methought that every star
I saw distant there afar,
Almost whispered, "Here we are,
Mucklemouth."

XV

Oh, the North, the hardy North,
Land of valour and of worth,
When thy warriors brave drew forth
Sword and shield;
How thy potent magic spell
Made thy sons behave so well,
Both on ocean's foaming swell
And the field!

XVI.

There they clustered all, I trow,
The *Firchlis* and Bear and Plough,
And still more I won't count now,
If I could;
And I sang as psalmist sings,
To extol the King of kings,
From whose bounteous hand there springs
Nought but good.

XVII.

Out of whose abundant store
Blessings pour on sea and shore,
And whose name let men adore
All their days;
Bowing with obeisance true
To His glory as is due,
Singing psalms with grace anew
To His praise.

XVIII.

Just as we were halfway round
The wide world, to Frisco bound,
There occurred what might confound
Most of men;
Nor is easy to explain,
Without taking greatest pain,
That which on the mighty main
Happened then.

XIX.

It was Sunday afternoon,
And the day was waning soon,
Then came night, nor did the moon
Show her face;
When at midnight, lo, behold!
If the truth be simply told,
What seemed odd to young and old
Then took place.

XX.

For another Sunday morn
Came to pass on breezes borne,
Just as midnight tolled the worn
One away;
Manna! what on earth is this?
Surely something's gone amiss
Which no learn'd hypothesis
Could explain.

XXI.

Two whole Sundays in one week
Might indeed confound a Greek,
And must surely be unique
In their style;
And two dates of thirteenth day,
Whether it be March or May,
Seemed devised but to betray
And beguile.

XXII.

Yet, forsooth, e'en so it was,
Far beyond what rules and laws
And what learning from what cause
I could claim;
For the more I scratched my head,
To recall what I had read,
So the more and more misled
I became.

XXIII.

Pentagruel's birth of fame,
As an instance I could name,
With three Thursdays in the same
Single week;
But I always thought that it
Was a mere satiric skit,
But for truth could not admit
Such a freak.

XXIV.

But no freak at all was here,
Though the cause was far from clear,
As the freak of a leap year
Is to some;
And the marvel to behold
So bamboozled young and old,
That we did, as we were told,
Hold our tongue.

XXV.

Thus was I in quite a fix,
Trying how I best could mix
Hundreds three and sixty-six
In one whole;
But at last I gave it up,
Like bad sugar, when you sup,
That will neither melt in cup
Nor in bowl.

XXVI.

Till the Captain came to me,
As his wont was, frank and free,
And then told me it was he
Who did this;
Since he found that Yankees blind,
Going westward never mind,
But their Sabbaths leave behind
And dismiss.

XXVII.

This they do in search of wealth,
Disregarding all their health,
If they only, e'en by stealth,
Fill their hand;
So, as he was staunch and true,
Now and then he gave them *two*,
When the truants turned to view
Their own land.

XXVIII.

On his very latest trip
To Japan on board his ship,
All of them contrived to slip
Sabbath Day;
And, alas! the wicked horde
The same day threw overboard,
But which now he got restored
On his way.

XXIX.

And my youthful *vis-à-vis*
Was as charming as could be,
"And who then," you ask, "was she
When at home?"
She was *bly*some Nelly Bly,
Trying round the world to fly,
And to beat all passers by
Land and foam.

XXX.

Which she did, I'm proud to tell,
Did the bonnie, blysome Nell,
Beating every beau and belle
On her trip;
And 'twas quite a treat to be
Sailing the Pacific sea,
And have blysome Nell with me
On the ship.

XXXI.

After we had stoutly sailed
Through high surges that prevailed
San Francisco then we hailed
As we neared;
Till we passed the Golden Gate
Of the States' most western state,
When my roving lady mate
Disappeared.

XXXII.

And she fled with mighty hand
Right across her native land,
To New York, that cherished strand
Of her own;
And, like all her shifty kind,
Me with broken heart and mind
Left lamenting far behind,
Quite alone

XXXIII.

So, alas! I'm bound to go
On my rambles to and fro,
Through hot climes and driving snow,
Sleet and rain;
As the spirit moves my ways,
Singing songs of love and praise,
Down the dells and up the braes
Once again.

XXXIV.

With fleet foot and crook in hand
There I wandered through the land
Whose great heights and valleys grand
I admired;
Till the time was drawing nigh
When I ought to say good-bye,
And with blessings from on high
I retired.

XXXV.

Though I stretched my footsteps free,
Yet was only seen by me
Far from what there was to see
Of this soil;
For to see the country all,
With its wonders great and small,
Would enthral as in a trawl
All my toil.

XXXVI.

For the Yellowstone, they say,
Beats in spouting geysers gay
Wakaréwaréwa's play
Beyond doubt;
While Kentucky's Mammoth Cave,
On which ranting tourists rave,
Licks creation, cave or grave,
Out and out.

XXXVII.

Then Yosemité's Big Trees
Fernshaw's beat in girth with ease,
But if quite so tall as these,
Who can say?
Nor shall I attempt to guess
What I cannot well express,
Knowing well that some say Yes,
Some say Nay.

XXXVIII.

Then the Rockies—oh! they do
Rise to meet the welkin blue,
Till they nearly fade from view
Up the sky;
While the cañons placed between,
Without blade of grass or green,
Are too frightful to be seen
By the eye.

XXXIX.

And the Mormons! oh, great Scot!
What a haggard, scraggy lot!
And on frail mankind what blot
And what shame!
For all modesty is dead,
Both with young and hoary head,
Where the sacred nuptial bed
'S but a name.

XL.

Though the wanton Brigham Young
At last closed his godless tongue,
Yet are seeds of bramble sprung
By side ways,
That pervert the ways of truth,
And full well deserve, forsooth,
To be shut in old Tolbooth
All their days.

XLI.

Mothers, maidens (?), one and all,
Young and old, and great and small,
Are spellbound within the thrall
Of low lust;
And so sunken in the mire
Of base passions' low desire,
That their wretched lives inspire
Dire disgust.

XLII.

Canada was last, not least
Of the lands that much increased
My great joy, and was a feast
And surprise;
Where I saw the warlike race
Who had left their native place,
But still held it dear as grace
In their eyes.

XLIII.

Though the crew had said adieu
To Britannia's mountains blue,
Yet they hoped and hoped to view
Them again;
Having fixed their best desires,
Till the fire of life expires,
On the land where are their sires
Lowly lain.

XLIV.

Loyal in their true heart's core
To Britannia's distant shore,
Never, never, never more
Shall they fail,
But through sunshine, storm, and cloud,
And the blaze of cannons loud,
Shall they fight like heroes proud,
And prevail.

XLV.

Then I slowly raised my hand
Where at last I took my stand,
And devoutly blessed the land
Far and near;
And implored by Heav'n's decree
That prosperity might be
Sprinkled down from sea to sea,
Year to year.

XLVI.

But once more I had to go
O'er the seas where breezes blow,
Blizzard being as deep in woe
As could be;
For we travelled many a mile,
And jumped over many a stile,
Since we callants met erst while
Out at sea.

XLVII.

And he said he'd do his best
To conform to my behest,
That the laws should be redressed
In his land;
And by all his hooks and crooks
Would he boycott the vile rooks
Who would dare to steal my books
From my hands.

XLVIII.

Then we sang our final song,
Though in sorrow all along,
And we raised our voices strong
Yet once more ;
And with many a hearty cheer
Did we sing these verses clear,
As I left for, oh ! my dear
Native shore :—

DEOCH AN DORUIS.

1.

" Come," said my chum, "for this last parting glass,
For soon must we part, p'r'aps, for ever,
And drink to each widow and bashful young lass,
And wives from which hearts never sever ;
E'en so let us drink to your own native land,
In this ere-we-part 'deoch an doruish,'
And long may her sons guard Britannia's strand,
And live long to fight and to flourish."

2.

" So be it," cried I, "wheresoever we roam,
Britannia we always will cherish,
And fight for the tight little island, our home,
With pride till we conquer or perish ;
And here's in return to this land of your own,
So great and so wide in dimensions,
And fortune protect it from that horrid bone,
The bone of disloyal dissensions."

3.

And then we shook hands ere we quaffed the red wine,
And clinked our good glasses in earnest,
And "I shall be yours," said "and you will be mine,
When fighting is strongest and sternest;
When breakers of peace and the rumours of wars
Shall change our fine calm to foul weather,
THE RED, WHITE, AND BLUE *and* THE STRIPES AND THE STARS
Will fight and will conquer together!

4.

"Though space may divide us, and wild, raging waves
Of ocean may happen to part us,
Alas for the treacherous foemen and knaves
Who venture to sunder or thwart us!
Our hearts will be true as the truest of tars
Or bloom of the mountain's sweet heather;
THE RED, WHITE, AND BLUE *and* THE STRIPES AND THE STARS
Will fight and will conquer together!

5.

"So here is success to our same stock of blood,
Though scattered throughout the world over,
And long may it compass the field and the flood,
Where tramples the foot of the rover;
And here is good luck to our scrapes and our scars,
Should wounds ever scar our good leather;
THE RED, WHITE, AND BLUE *and* THE STRIPES AND THE STARS
Will fight and will conquer together!!!"

XLIX.

Why should I prolong this tale,
Or toss longer on the gale
Since I almost now can hail
The old goal
Which the world's remotest range,
With its ever-varied change,
Never, never could estrange
From my soul?

L.

For my wife is weeping still
With salt tears her eyes that fill,
Praying, pondering when will
I come home;
Let me clasp her to my breast
Whom I always loved the best,
And give promise for the rest
Not to roam.

LI.

Also to my toddling boys
I return with curious toys,
To increase their stock of joys,
God be blest!
With fresh vigour from the main
I return once more again,
Yet to clasp my infant twain
To my breast.

LII.

So, my greyhound at long last
Past Green Erin sails full fast,
And lo! now the perils past
And the toil;
Here is England, this the strand
Of the gallant Scottish land;
And I feel my heart expand
To their soil.

SCOTIA.

THE ROVER'S TOAST.

1.

Oh, Scotia, my native land,
Though far my footsteps may have trod,
To you I stretch a loyal hand,
And love your hallowed soil and sod;
Where I was wont to roam of old,
With such a blithesome heart and head,
And ever shall your sons uphold
Your woods and wolds till they are dead.

2.

Your star has oft been on the wane,
O'erclouded by some locust flight,
But hearts of valour throbbed again,
And for your sake prepared to fight;

The fiery cross, from ocean's wave
To hills' uprearing crests of blue,
Proclaimed aloud: "Our land to save,
We win or perish yeomen true."

3.

Who but would fight for such a land,
Romantic, beautiful and bold!
Though wandering on foreign strand,
The heart still clings to that of old;
And ever and for ever shall,
While life's warm passion swells the breast,
Be true and unequivocal,
As eagle to her soaring nest.

4.

Then pledge we to the Northern Land,
And raise her high upon her throne
Of matchless beauty, and of brand
Unquelled of ages past and gone;
And here's a health with honours three
To Highland heath and Lowland vale,
The homes of might and minstrelsy,
And nurseries of song and tale.
Adieu!

OTHER WORKS BY "RALPH."

TOIL AND TRAVEL;

BEING A TRUE PROSE DESCRIPTION OF "RALPH'S" OWN REAL VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD,

And referred to in the Preface to this book, will be published in October.

SONGS SUNG IN SUNNY LANDS

WILL FOLLOW SHORTLY,

Being all composed by "RALPH" in various foreign climates.

GLENFRUIN:

A POEM OF ADVENTURE,

Is now in preparation.

NOTES.

Dedication.—"Yankee Doodle" is the National Anthem of America, but it is not a good one, and I'll take leave to recommend another in "Toil and Travel," giving my reasons for doing so.

CANTO I.

Page 1. Captain Cates in flesh and blood is at present the popular Commodore Captain of the popular Commodore ship *Victoria*, of the P. and O. Company.

P. 4. "The Scot who takes the toll." It is said that wherever on earth you may roam, you will meet a canny Scot, and that one of them is at the North Pole, but I hae ma doots aboot that.

P. 17. "Hoh, the *Vic*—the *Victory*." It is well known to my readers that the ever-famous man-o'-war *Victory* nearly sank at her moorings in Portsmouth harbour, in the year of Jubilee 1887. It is for this reason that the *Victoria* is made to start from Portsmouth, although I am quite aware that her usual port of call is Plymouth.

Canto II.

P. 45. "When we reached remote Port Saide." This port is or was a great port for gambling and for ruining "griffins."

P. 46. "Bitter Lakes." It is about the Bitter Lakes that the Children of Israel are supposed to have crossed the Red Sea, of which they were once a portion. It is well known to geologists that sandy shores encroach upon the ocean in process of time, whereas rocky shores recede.

P. 46. "Great Canal." In the Great Canal or Suez Canal ships used to stay at night before the new lights were invented, and a ball frequently given. As regards the "sips from ruby lips" we need not say anything about that.

P. 54. "Perim." Perim is a small island in the very mouth of the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, and one of the hottest and most melancholy spots on the face of the earth. Ralph was once ordered to go there and be prepared to stay for some time. But on reaching the island he was glad to find out that it was only necessary to stay one day.

P. 57. "Kate." A selection of verses from "Kate" is being published with music to a simple, original air invented by Ralph himself, and sung just as Captain Singwell sang it.

Canto III.

P. 77. "*Jeldi ăo*" means "Come quickly" in Hindostan. "*Bandra*" means "Monkey." "*Yon bandra*" is a very frequent and innocent expression with the Quohais.

"*Soor and loocha*" is a different kind of ejaculation, and means "Pig and blackguard." It is a very insulting expression to use to Mahommedans, as to them, as to the Jews, pigs are an abomination.

"*Jăo ek dam*" means "Go at once." "*Bŏt achcha hai*" means "is very good." "My good boat is very good" is therefore the meaning of this mixed line.

P. 79. "There the Bay itself whose fame." The name Bombay was given by the Portuguese, and means "Bonnie Bay."

"The Elephanta Cave" is in a small island in the Bombay Harbour, about a thousand years old, and much visited by tourists.

P. 82. "The high hills of Matheran." Matheran is one of the hill resorts of Bombay. It is much nearer and more convenient, though not so high as Mahableshwur, which is the chief mountain-seat of the Presidency.

P. 84. "The Duke." H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught was at this time Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army and Grand Master-Mason.

P. 85. "The Song of the Bombay Freemasons." The author has had the honour of twice being Master of a Masonic lodge, and

once Grand Master of Ceremonies of all Scottish Freemasonry in India.

P. 87. "Primis Urbs." "Urbs primis in Indis" is the motto of Bombay. Whether it is quite entitled to so proud a motto over the head of Calcutta I am not able to say. The meaning of this line, therefore, is, "The chief city of the Indies is."

P. 87. "For the only public park." The Victoria and Albert Park in Bombay; and the Museum on its grounds, are not world-widely famous for their magnificence.

P. 88. "*Bundobust*" means provision, or preparation.

P. 88. "Rocky Ridge." Ralph can vouch that the Malabar Rocky Ridge is the best place to get a fine view of Bombay and its varied surroundings.

P. 92. "Towers of Silence" are the places where the Parsees put their dead on gratings to be devoured by birds of prey. They are near the Ridge, and beside them are the "Tanks," which supply Bombay with water. These tanks used to be left exposed, and the vultures occasionally dropped a dead Parsee into them for a change. The last time I saw these tanks they were covered in, but this portion of the poem had been written then, and I am sure Mr. Merwanjee would be angry at me if I did not mention our conversation.

P. 97. "The rendezvous full of skill." The European General Hospital of Bombay is

exactly as Ralph describes it, but when the Municipality got the handsome present from Mister Mucklemouth, which his right hand stole from his left one, they commenced to build a new one, so that they promise shortly

"To redeem the fair renown
Of their race."

P. 99. "Kalbedevie Road" is the principal native thoroughfare in Bombay, and swarms with all sorts of clans and creatures.

P. 103. "Borah." The Borahs are, to a great extent, pedlars, and will "tosh" you for anything. As a rule, they win, though I don't know how.

P. 104: "Juggler." The Indian jugglers are sleight-of-hand men almost as cunning as Maskelyne and Cook themselves, but not *quite*.

P. 106. "Tonga Däk." A small *dos-a-dos*, carried by two ponies, going at the gallop. Posting on the whole is very good in India.

Canto IV.

P. 107. "Ghauts." This word means "mountains." It is more especially applied to the chain of mountains that runs along the coast of Malabar. Mahableshwur is one of them.

Poonah is the headquarters of the Bombay Army, 2,000 feet above sea-level, and 119 miles from Bombay.

P. 116. "Any harbour in a storm." Madras has no harbour, neither a bite nor a bight of

the sea. Ships are warned to clear out before hurricanes come on. I was in Madras one time during the presence of one of these, and watched the ships fighting the gale outside from the windows of Lippert's Hotel. But Madras has got a very good Museum, particularly rich in marine specimens.

P. 118. "Zoo." The Zoological and Botanic Gardens are two of the best sights of Calcutta. The gardens contain the second largest Banyan tree in the world.

P. 120. It was into the Black Hole of Calcutta that Suraju Dowlah threw his victims during the Indian Mutiny. The General Post Office is built on the site of it.

P. 122. "Dufferin." Lord Dufferin was then the popular Viceroy of India. It was during his time that Upper Burmah was added to the British Empire, and King Theebaw "clawed" and deported to India.

P. 124. "Peccavi" means "I have sinned." Sir Charles Napier, after taking Sinde in India, is said to have made use of this word to announce his victory. "I have Sinde." It is a clever expression, and reminds one of Cæsar's "V.V.V."

P. 125. Chiringee Road, and the Eden Gardens are the two most fashionable parts of the Town of Palaces.

P. 126. "The Sunburnt Soliloquy." The Sunburnt Soliloquy was written in order to draw the attention of the British public to a

very burning question with their fellow-countrymen in India. The rupee was at one time worth 2*s.* 2*d.*; it is now worth 1*s.* 5*d.* When Ralph started to complete the "Girdle" it was the lowest ever it reached, 1*s.* 4*d.* So that in converting rupees into gold he was losing one pound out of every three!

P. 130. "*Terai.*" This name is now almost anglicised, meaning the low, alluvial, fever-stricken plains at the base of the mountains in India.

Canto V.

P. 138. "Mastodon." The mastodon is an extinct animal something like an elephant, but much larger.

P. 147. "Make it so." When the sun is taken at noon it is reported to the captain, who generally returns the answer, "Make it so."

P. 148. "Sextant." The proper way of working the sextant is to look at the sun through it, and then work it down to the horizon as truly described in the "Girdle."

P. 170. "*Cha till, Cha till,*" etc., means "I return, I return, I return, no, never." It is one of the most melancholy of Highland laments. It is said that Rob Roy MacGregor when on his deathbed asked for this tune to be played on the bagpipes, and that he died before the wail was finished. It is from this circumstance that Sir Walter Scott takes his

cue in describing the death-scene of Roderick Vic Alpine Dhu with the minstrelsy of Allan Bane soothing him to his long, last sleep.

CANTO VI.

P. 185. "King George's Sound" is the first port of call in Australia when *Royal Mail* are outward bound.

P. 188. "Mr. Froude." Mr. Froude's book, "Oceana," misled me in New Zealand, as I shall describe in detail, in my "Toil and Travel."

P. 191. "Gordon's Grave." This song must not be supposed to have been composed to General Gordon, though I have not forgotten him in some other poetry. This Gordon was an unfortunate colonist famous for his daring and riding. Having got into monetary difficulties, partly by misfortune, and partly, I am afraid, by his own imprudence, he shot himself on the beach of Brighton, one of the suburbs of Melbourne, some fifteen years ago. He is pre-eminently the poet of the colonies, and I like his little book very much. His verse, like himself, belongs to the manly as distinguished from the mawkish school of poetry.

P. 205. "*Rara Avis.*" Australia is the original habitat of the *Rara Avis* or Black Swan. The White Swans murder them, so that the two kinds are never found on the same lake.

P. 209. "Jenolan Caves." These caves are about one hundred and fifty miles from Sydney, and are perhaps the finest sight in Australia.

Canto VII.

P. 216. "Tarawera" is the volcano in New Zealand that burst about three years ago, and caused great devastation and loss of life. The ashes buried the famous White and Pink Terraces some forty feet below the surface.

P. 221. "The Ottira Gorge" is said to be the finest gorge in the world. It is certainly one of the finest.

P. 222. "Rata" is a parasite tree that throttles its foster-parent, and grows in its stead to a large size.

"Iffrinn" is the Hades of the Gael.

P. 225. "Wakatipu" is the most romantic lake in New Zealand, surrounded on all sides by high mountains, and said to be bottomless.

P. 226. "Tui." This bird is peculiar to New Zealand, about the size of a thrush, and beats all other birds in the sweetness of its melodies.

P. 230. "New Caledonia" is a convict colony of France, where they transport all their ruffians. I object to the name.

Canto IX.

P. 314. "Java's Isle" belongs to Dutch India, where I met with much kindness.

P. 315. Boero Boeder is an ancient Buddhist monument about two thousand years old, and about the largest ancient structure in the world.

P. 320. "The famous Fane of Great Heav'n" was burnt down about a month before I visited Pekin.

P. 323. "Vladivostók." We pronounce this word with the accent on the penultimate, but the Russians themselves put the accent on the last syllable. We also mispronounce the word "Trafalgar."

CANTO X.

P. 327. "*Hara-kiri*" was a species of suicide prevalent till lately among the Japanese.

P. 332. "*Fir chlish*" are the Merry Dancers of the North British.

P. 333. "It was Sunday afternoon," passing the 180th degree of longitude. You repeat the day you pass if going eastward, and *vice versâ* if going westward.

P. 334. "Pentagruel" is a hero of Rabelais, and a most extraordinary hero he is. The character is said to have been a political skit on some high personage in France.

P. 336. "Nelly Bly." This racing American lady was my *vis-à-vis* at table in the *Oceanic* coming across the Pacific.

P. 337. "Golden Gate" is the name applied to the entrance to the San Francisco harbour.

P. 341. "And he said he'd do his best." This verse was purposely inserted as a humble appeal against the unprincipled American publishers who pilfer the works of British authors; and with the hope that the copyright law of America will be some day what it ought to be.

P. 342. "*Deoch an doruis*," or "The Stirrup Cup," is inserted with every kind feeling, and I fondly hope that Britannia and America always

"Will fight and will conquer *together!*"

RALPH.

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